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# MONONIA

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# MONONIA

## A Love Story of 'Forty-eight

By

JUSTIN McCARTHY

Boston
Small, Maynard & Company
1901

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# MONONIA



## CHAPTER I

### SISTER AND BROTHER

DESMOND LODGE was the name of a house which stood on the height of a small enclosure of ground sloping down to a river in the neighbourhood of a seaport town in the south of Ireland. Desmond Lodge was really only a detached member of a row of suburban dwellings which stretched along its side of the river. But in the region which gives an opening scene to this story, it was not then thought possible for any one who claimed respectability and gentility to live in an ordinary numbered house. We find the same idea still asserting itself in most of the seacoast settlements even of practical England, where it appears to be assumed that only the shop-keepers and such like can live in numbered houses, and that every abode which professes to be the residence of persons belonging to a higher social rank must have a distinctive designation all to itself, even though it only stands as one of a row of homesteads constructed after the same fashion and displaying the like dimensions. The owner of Desmond Lodge could, however, have said in vindication of his dwelling's distinctive title that it had been Desmond Lodge during several generations of his family, and that it bore that title even in the distant days when it looked down upon the river from a lonely height.

The house was an old-fashioned, unpicturesque building of whitish-grey, conceived and constructed in the style of the early Georges, with rectangular bulging

windows; and its attractiveness consisted mainly in the beauty of its situation. One might apply to it the words ascribed to a countryman of the author, and say of Desmond Lodge that "its front was at the back." In other words, the visitors obtained admission by ringing or knocking at a small door which stood unassumingly on the common road of suburban traffic; and it was only when he had passed through the house and stood upon the sloping lawn that he became aware of an imposing entrance and a broad flight of stone steps. If it happened to be his first visit to the Lodge, he was not likely to become aware of this fact all at once; for his attention was sure to be attracted from the house itself to the beauty of the river, which flowed almost level with the turf of the narrow lawn.

This story opens on a mild, sunny morning in the early February of the year 1848, that year of such moment in the revolutionary history of Europe, that year of revolutionary movement which made itself felt even in England, and did not fail to make its deep impression on the life of Ireland. It made its impression, too, on the lives of those who are to figure in this story; for, although this is not in any sense a political narrative, and is concerned mainly with the lives and fortunes and the loves and hates of men and women whose names are unrecorded in political history, yet it derives some colouring from the events which were influencing the public of its time, and may therefore help in its own way to illustrate the temperament and the feelings of a season which seems already to be far removed from the atmosphere of our own days.

A young man and woman — one might almost say a boy and girl — were standing on the lawn in front, or, as perhaps it ought to be put, at the back, of Desmond Lodge. Maurice Desmond was the young man, and he was the only son of the Lodge's owner. The girl was

his sister Mononia, so called by her father from the old historic name of the province of Munster; and she was the elder of the two by about a year. Maurice was rather a tall young man, slender of frame, but athletic in build, and with something about his movements which would have suggested to the eye of an expert that Maurice Desmond was sailor-like in his ways, or at least was the sort of young fellow who might naturally be associated with the river and the sea and the sails and the oars of boats. The girl had dark hair and dark eyes, and there was a tone of melancholy, of what might be called perhaps Celtic melancholy, in her voice. The river here was but a broad, rapid, inland stream, running between low level banks of meadow and garden. It had come down from a region of grey hills, some of them showing the ruins of old castles and abbeys which had borne a part in the historic past, and were still haunted by legends and the memories of famous names, — famous at least in those out-of-the-world places, — and from clusters of old trees, the branches of which sometimes nearly met across the narrow stream as it issued from its mountain source. As it made its way onward from the place where the pair were standing, it grew broader and broader until it passed through the city and was covered with craft of all conditions, many from far foreign ports; and it had not a long way to run before it became lost in the sea. The peculiar delight of the young people who lived upon its inland banks was that they should row in their boats from among the meadows and the gardens and the flowers in the course of a bright hour or two down to the green waves and the salt water of the great harbour, and even into the billows of the ocean itself. It was but an afternoon's amusement to this brother and sister and to all their young companions to get into their boats from their gardens, sloping down to the river-side, and thus

pass delightedly and without much toil into the open sea, and, when they had tossed about there as long as their time would allow, to row back to their homes not too late for the family dinner.

The whole region was steeped in the poetry and romance of river and sea together. It was hardly possible for even the most commonplace and prosaic mind to be familiar with that river, and not to be lifted occasionally into the realms of mysticism and of poetry. At the height of summer there was no overpowering heat; and even in the winter the atmosphere was not wintry, but only soft and grey, like the memories and the legends which still hung over the stream and its shores.

The brother and sister were standing at the verge of the river, on the grassy lawn. There was no boat near. It was yet too early in the season for those who had no actual business on the water. The faces of both were clouded, and their talk had thus far been of topics which did not bring exhilaration with them.

"It must all come to an end," the young woman said in the tone of one who merely announces a foregone conclusion. "I have seen it this long time."

"Of course it must come to an end," the young man echoed. "We are simply done up,—we are ruined, and that's all."

"There is nothing to be done," Mononia said, "but what you and I can do. We are not children any longer, dearest boy; and, if the utter ruin is to be averted, it can only be averted by you and me."

"We must go out into the world," the young man declared impetuously. "We must leave this place, Mononia, and go and fight it out. I have been thinking of this for a long time. It is a comfort to know there is a world elsewhere. I have been making up my mind to that."

"You never told me," said the girl, with a sad, sweet smile.

"Well, I wanted to put off the telling of it as long as I could. I wanted to spare you the trouble as long as I could."

"That was like you, my dear," she said.

"I kept on hoping that something would turn up. It's like our Irish way, I suppose. We are always hoping and thinking that some stroke of good luck will save us, even when we see ruin staring us in the face; and only when the crash comes, at last, do we make up our minds that something has to be done besides living in the comfortable faith that some providential intervention will rescue us from the trouble of making up our minds to do anything."

"I wish we had talked of this before," Mononia said. "I have been so often on the point of opening my heart to you about it, and then something always came between; and so many pleasant hours kept coming that I had not the courage to spoil them as they were passing, and I shrank from disturbing and distressing others by my gloomy forebodings. You see, dear boy, I am the elder; and I did not want to break in upon your enjoyments with the melancholy wisdom of the grown-up person. Remember I shall be twenty on my next birthday, and so I am entitled to be wise and solemn and grave; but I wanted to keep my wisdom and solemnity and gravity all to myself as long as I could."

"You are always thinking of everybody but yourself," he said. "That's your way; but I am afraid it is not my way. Anyhow, I am glad we have both of us seen our way to talk this business out at last. You think that things here have gone wholly to the bad?"

"I see no hope whatever of anything being done but what can be done by you and me. If we are not to sink into actual pauperism, we have nothing to look to but our own courage and our own efforts. There is no one else to lend a helping hand,—no one," she repeated with a peculiar and melancholy emphasis.

"I know what you mean," the young man said. "You think he can never be brought to see things as they are, and to change his way of living?"

"No way," she said, after a short pause. "His health is gone, and he will never again be equal to the strain of any new resolution. We must work for him, dear boy, and try to make the remainder of his life as smooth as it can be made."

"But we shall have to leave this place," the young man said. "He will have to make up his mind to that: there is nothing else for it."

"Yes, yes, he will have to put up with that," she answered; "but it will be all the better for him when the thing is done once for all. So long as we remain in this place, and each day seems much the same to him as the one that went before, he will never be brought to see that there is any need of trying to lead a new and different life; and he will let things run on just in the old way, and believe that the creditors can always be staved off, just as our people did, I suppose, before him. When the new life is actually forced upon him, then he will have to make up his mind to bear it; and we must work for him, and try to make the new life as easy for him as we can. I firmly believe it will be the best thing for him in the end. If our darling mother had only lived, things might have gone better; but now it all rests upon you and me, and we must prove ourselves equal to the task. You said just now that there is a world elsewhere — that is from *Coriolanus*, is it not?— and you must try the world elsewhere, dear boy."

"But what about you," he asked almost impetuously.

"About me? Oh! well, of course, I must remain here, and take care of him and try to make him happy."

"But how on earth do you propose to live?"

"Well, I can teach — in a sort of way — drawing and French and Italian and that sort of thing, not very high-

class or scientific teaching, but it will do very well for girls here to make a beginning with; and I am sure I shall get some pupils, and then I mean to write articles and stories and such like. You know I have a great ambition to be an authoress."

The young man smiled a melancholy smile.

"Now don't discourage my young ambition," Mononia said, with a humorous flash waking up for the moment in her dark eyes.

"I am afraid there is no great demand for literature — at least, for paying literature — in the south of Ireland just now," Maurice observed with something of an apologetic air. "We think you wonderfully clever down here, Mononia; but I don't see as yet any great hopes of one's making a living by literature in this part of the world."

"Come now, you said only just this moment that there is a world elsewhere."

"Yes; but, then, you refuse to go and look for the world elsewhere, and you say that your place is here, and only here."

"So it is; but then, my dear, discouraging Maurice, one can get at the world elsewhere without going there. I have not heard that there is any intention on the part of the authorities to discontinue the penny post, and I am not bound to limit my contributions merely to the *Southern Magazine*."

"There are so many writers," Maurice said gravely.

"That they can put up with one more," his sister added, finishing the sentence for him in her own way. "At all events, I can but try. I must try, so there is no particular merit in my heroism."

"Our friends will come to know that the crash is near at hand," Maurice said gloomily. "They are sure to hear of it. I daresay some of them can guess at it already."

"Yes; and then will come a new effort to stave off the trouble once more; and that is just what I hate, and what I won't have. I am sick of these well-meant, friendly efforts to put off the inevitable. It is only pauperism in disguise, and I would rather have pauperism open and recognised and called by its own name."

"So would I a thousand times!" Maurice exclaimed with vehemence. "Give me your hand, old girl. We are heart and soul together in this."

"So we are in most things," Mononia said, as their hands met and clasped. "I feel almost happy now that we have had this talk, and that we look at things with the same eyes and the same resolve."

"I can face anything," Maurice said, "so long as I know that you and I are inspired by the same purpose."

Then the brother and sister remained silent for a few seconds, each clasping each other's hands. Suddenly Mononia withdrew her hand, and pointed to the sky behind the house.

"Look," she said, "how the smoke from the chimneys goes straight up to that beautiful blue sky where no breath of wind seems to disturb it. Come, Maurice, that is a good augury for our future and for the result of this talk we have had together,—that light smoke from the chimneys of our old home, going straight up with no cross-current of wind to disturb it. Let us accept the augury, Maurice. It must mean well for us both and for poor dear father, and perhaps even for the old home itself, although that does not matter so much; for where we three are together there will always be a home, no matter what the four walls are like which we may have to welcome as a shelter."

Maurice felt grave misgivings in his secret heart at the possibility of any secure home being easily or speedily found which could keep these three together, when once what they had both spoken of as the crash should

have come. He had been brought up to do nothing. He had had a good education,—what might perhaps be called a good literary education at the local school,—and his father had always told him that he was to study for the bar, and tried to fill him with the hopes that he might one day become a great advocate. But the laws of the country did not at the time allow a man of Maurice's faith, the Roman Catholic, to obtain a profession in law or physic through the medium of one of the great universities; and for a young man to begin his studies for the bar as a mere outsider required some considerable preliminary payments. The fees which would have to be paid, in order that Maurice might enter himself as a student for the legal profession, had never been forthcoming; and he still found himself as far as he had ever been from the threshold of the law court. He loved reading, and had literary tastes and a strong ambition to succeed in literature; but he had too much clear good sense not to know that the civilised world was overflowing with young men of like tastes and like ambitions, only a very small proportion of whom could be counted on as likely to make a living in the fascinating fields of literature. So far as he could judge, there was not the slightest chance that any young man could make a living in that way unless he went in as one of the regular competitors in some great city, like London or New York. And this he had heart and courage enough to do; but it meant, all the same, the breaking up of the old home and the separation, for how long no one could tell, from the sister who had been his close companion so long as he could remember anything of existence on his side.

These were the thoughts which passed through Maurice's mind when his sister pointed upwards to the white smoke ascending straight in the sky, and bade him to accept the hopeful augury. His face had clouded for

a moment, but he was resolved that no hint of his passing dejection should throw a shadow across her brighter mood.

"We accept the augury, indeed," he said with a smile which made answer to hers; "and we welcome it as the signal of the better day that is dawning for us. This is the happiest talk we have had for a long time, Mononia; and I begin to feel that we have now come, all at once, to be a full-grown man and a full-grown woman, and no longer a mere boy and girl."

"Good-by to the rolling of hoops and the catching of butterflies," Mononia exclaimed, under the joyous impulse of his seemingly happy mood.

"And now," he added, "for the rolling of logs, and the catching of publishers!"

So the talk came to an end for the moment; and Mononia went to look afer her household duties, while Maurice turned to and did some work of gardening until breakfast time should come. But the talk was to be renewed again and again; and the brother and sister both felt that this first admitted and accepted recognition of the serious crisis which had arrived, opened, in strict reality, a new era in their lives. Up to this time they had indeed been merely boy and girl, enjoying to the full all the amusements and delights which came in their way, sharing each other's studies and books, confiding to each other every new impression made by some new picture or statue or poem, or by some new light or shadow thrown upon the familiar landscape around them; put out and cast down every now and then by passing troubles, which always had to do with creditors and money, but only regarding these mishaps as interruptions and disturbances to their ordinary enjoyments, as a wet day might have been, and over which it was out of their power to exercise any control. Now they had both come to see that their future depended wholly on

themselves and on their own exertions; that the kind of life which, with all its interruptions and mishaps, had been so delightful, could not possibly endure much longer, and that they must either work for a living or see their father, along with them, sink into a state of abject dependency, which to a high-spirited young man and woman would seem something worse than the open and avowed pauperism which proclaims itself to the law and calls upon the law to provide it with food and shelter. That was the difference between the old life and that new life which the brother and sister felt to be opening upon them from that very day. As yet nothing more definite had come up than a talk of a few minutes between the young man and the young woman; but each of them felt that the words they had spoken were like some of the spell-words which they had read of in their *Arabian Nights*,— spell-words which closed on them the doors of the world of illusion, and opened for them the gates of the world of reality.

## CHAPTER II

### THE HEAD OF THE HOUSE OF DESMOND

THE elder Desmond belonged to a sort of class or race the numbers of which were diminishing even in the Ireland of his day, and have become reduced almost to nothing in ours. He was understood to be a descendant of one of the great old families whom foreign invasion had robbed of their ancestral castles, broad domains, and time-honoured privileges. No very strict examination appears to have been made into the claims of the elder Desmond; but it seems to have been generally taken for granted that he was one of the noble race of the dispossessed, and thus entitled to universal sympathy. Perhaps, indeed, to speak of Desmond's claims is to use a word somewhat too assertive,—a word implying a demand which might appear of itself to challenge contradiction. The elder Desmond can hardly be said to have made any claims of this kind. He simply gave himself out as the lineal representative of a great dispossessed family; and his neighbours took him at his word, and there was no controversy about the matter. In the society amid which he chiefly moved—a society consisting almost altogether of middle-class town residents—there seemed to be a sort of general feeling that the presence of such a man, with such an ancestry, was a credit and an honour to the community, and that it was to the advantage of all to recognise such a claim and make the most of it. The elder Desmond had little or no intercourse with the gentry of the county; but, when he did come into such society, he was usually received with that sort of deference which politeness puts forth as a tribute to fallen greatness, even when politeness has not quite made up its mind as to the demonstrable validity of the

claim. But in the city itself the common inclination was to accept the elder Desmond at his own valuation, and to avoid any question of it.

Desmond had lived through the greater part of his life upon local appointments which were considerately put within his reach when they were not actually created for his special benefit. In his earlier days he had studied law, and had actually become a qualified attorney; but he did not show any inclination for the work of the courts, and all he gained by his legal position was the very decided and practical advantage which it conferred on him by qualifying him for more than one public office which he could not have held if he were an ordinary member of society. He was Town Clerk for a while, he was Clerk of the Peace for a while, he was Registrar to the Courts of Assize, he was secretary to this, that, and the other local institution; and in all these various positions he distinguished himself by geniality of manner, bright conversational powers, and apparent anxiety to oblige every one, a remarkable capacity for enlisting good-humoured sympathy, and a quiet incapacity for attending to any of the regular duties of his office.

His personal history was always repeating itself. The authorities who had control of each successive office which he held found themselves obliged, after long exercise of patience and forbearance, to remove him gently from his official seat. Then the sympathy of his friends demanded that some other place should be found for him; and the other place was found, and the same story was told over again. Everybody liked him, and even the more censorious pitied him. There appeared to be something positively fascinating in his manner of offering himself as the heaven-appointed object of public good will and support. He had no vices in the worse and more aggressive sense of the word. He was always

generous when he had anything to give away, he loved good company, and it never would have occurred to him as possible that a man could dine alone with his own family or that he could plead economy as a reason for doing without anything which it suited his inclination to have. Whenever he did not dine out, he took good care to have friends to dine with him at his house.

Everybody enjoyed Desmond's little dinners. Every one said what a delightful host he was; and many of his habitual guests, who could not afford or were not inclined to entertain him at dinner parties in return for his hospitality, felt all the more bound to become active in their efforts to obtain for him some public office with a salary attached to it when it became necessary for him to resign the place which he had most recently occupied. It would have positively astonished a cynical philosopher of the more modern school if he could have seen and studied the energetic and disinterested efforts which a large number of Desmond's fellow-citizens were ready to make, at almost regular intervals, to preserve him from falling into that condition of actual poverty which would, in the ordinary course of things, have been the certain, and perhaps from the moralist's point of view the well-deserved, result of the kind of life which Desmond had complacently accepted as his destiny. The general impression among his circle of friends seemed to be that, so long as the community had any public office whatever to bestow, it would be an unpatriotic and an unworthy act to let so good a fellow as Desmond, and a fellow, too, who came of so good a family, remain in want of the means to live like a gentleman.

Desmond's wife lived and died a devoted admirer of her husband. The marriage had been a love match on both sides; and Mrs. Desmond was one of the women not uncommonly met, even in our cynical modern society, with whom love is destined, as the years go on, to

deepen into a sort of hero-worship. She was a woman of soft and gentle nature, with intelligence enough to form intense admiration for a mind which she recognised as superior to her own. She regarded her husband as a wonderful man because he knew Latin and Greek and French, and had visited Paris, had studied the Rhine, had crossed the Alps, and had actually spent some weeks in Rome.

Desmond was by his very nature and instincts an amateur. He was fond of literature. He was fond of pictures and statues. He gave himself out as an authority upon all questions of art and of culture; and it was his wife's fond conviction that, if he had not been compelled by want of means to condescend to mere commonplace work in local departments, he might have written great books and made himself known to the world as a man of genius. His faults had no existence for her, or, rather, she regarded as virtues what the criticism of cooler observers might have regarded as faults. He was, in fact, a lazy sensualist, although without the coarseness or the actual excess which usually marks the sensualist; and Mrs. Desmond looked upon him simply as a man who nobly put up with the ways of the society around him because he had not the opportunity of mixing with the society of scholars and artists and orators and men of rank, for which she felt sure his birth, his bringing up, his family traditions, and his intellectual gifts had properly qualified him. Desmond accepted her admiration and her devotion with the easy and passive good humour which belonged to him in all the ways of life, and she took it for granted that his love for her remained unchanged as her love for him. She was always urging on her boy and girl the imperative necessity of absolute reverence for the law which her husband laid down on every subject, and pointing out to them the Heaven-sent advantage which they enjoyed in

having a father who could always tell them how to think rightly and act rightly in all possible cases where any decision might be called for.

Now even the most popular and authoritative writers on the education of the young do not always seem to take account of the influence which the mere physical law of reaction, as it may be called, is sometimes apt to exercise in the family circle. As the boy and girl grew up and mixed with their school companions, it naturally happened that they began to become aware of the existence of opinions on all manner of subjects which did not entirely agree with those laid down as law and gospel for them at home. The boy and girl found themselves gradually drawn more and more into criticism of their father's opinions; and, as Mrs. Desmond would listen to no such criticism, they had to keep it all to themselves, even while, unconsciously perhaps to them, it grew all the stronger because of the self-imposed restraint.

The death of the mother while the son and daughter were yet mere boy and girl made the first great grief and desolation of their lives. They could not help observing, after a while, that the calamity seemed to make but little impression on the life of their father, and that, as soon as the time of mere conventional mourning was over, he seemed to enjoy his existence very much as he had done before, and was as bright an ornament of the sort of society which he gathered around him as he had been when his wife sat beside him to encourage him and to share in the pleasures of his social life. Then, too, for the first time they began to understand what manner of life that was to which their father had complacently given himself up. While Mrs. Desmond was living, her daughter and son were never allowed to know anything of the pitiful and paltry shifts and struggles for the means of maintaining a household

which were the regular incidents of daily life in Desmond Lodge. They never were allowed to know that the vulgar-looking strangers who sometimes sat in the kitchen for days and days together were not sheltered there as humble friends or relatives of the servants, but were actually bailiffs put into possession in order to see that the property was secured for the creditors until some arrangement could be made. When the elder Desmond ceased to give his daily attendance in one public office, the daughter and son were always given to understand that the first place was not good enough for a man of their father's intellect and education, and that the friends who were able to appreciate him had therefore found for him a position more worthy of his personal gifts and of his ancestry.

After the death of the fond and devoted mother the realities of their position began, not too quickly, to make themselves known to the daughter and the son. Mononia and Maurice had long been accustomed to an outspoken criticism of their father's opinions; and now there was forced on each of them an outspoken criticism of his mode of life. Each shrank at first from betraying any doubt of this kind to the other. The thought was always present to the mind of each that the devoted mother whom they had lost would have regarded such questionings as the utterances of sheer filial impiety; and each seemed to feel for a long time as if any criticisms of the father's acts would have been a sin against the mother's memory.

Meantime their lives went on, so far as ordinary occupations and amusements were concerned, very much as they had done before. They rowed in their boats on the river. They went to musical parties and to dances. They attended the debates of the two rival societies. They had their friends all around them; and an ordinary observer might never have known that the young man

and the young woman were becoming conscious at last that the whole artificial fabric of their social existence was breaking down, and that life must for them henceforth be a hard struggle. The law of reaction, to which reference has just been made, was working its full effect upon Mononia and Maurice. Its working had gone so far with Maurice that he had no longer any faith whatever left in him as to the historic dignity of the ancestry from which, if he had followed his father's teaching, he ought to believe himself to have descended. The influence, however, had a more healthful effect even than this on the character and the temper of the young man and young woman. It filled them both with a spirit of revolt against the kind of life which had so long been the way of Desmond Lodge, and with a resolute determination to live a life of steady and sustained struggle and of honourable independence. Then at last there came that talk on the February morning, which has just been described, and the brother and sister told each other that on them alone it rested to create the new life, and that the father whom they had so long obeyed, and whom they had so long tried to venerate, must henceforward be cared for and looked after as a child might be, that the natural conditions were reversed in this case, and that the only means of saving the father from utter degradation and ruin was that the son and daughter must take into their hands the direction, control, and mastery of his life.

On the early afternoon of the day when the sister and brother had had their morning's talk Mononia was sitting alone in her room. Her brother had gone out, as had been his habit these later months, to assist his father in the elder Desmond's official work,— more often than not indeed to do his father's official work for him. The elder Desmond never came home before the dinner hour; and even then he did not usually

come home to dine, but to dress and hurry off to dine somewhere else. When he did come home to dine, it was either because he had a dinner party invited to Desmond Lodge that evening or he had picked up with a friend or two whom he brought unceremoniously home to dine with him. Mononia was therefore accustomed to have the day-time before dinner left on her own hands; and during the winter months she occupied most of this spare time in reading and writing. She could read French and Italian fluently, and had learned these chiefly out of books and with some occasional help from her father,—for she had never been in any foreign country,—and it must be added with more than occasional help from Mr. Conrad, in whose school her brother had had most of his early studies. Mononia's friends and neighbours had already made up their minds to regard the girl as a poetess, on the strength of some verses for which her father had obtained a place in the *Southern Magazine*, a local publication which had been started by some determined lovers of literature, and which had already spread its fame so far as to obtain some notices in the Dublin newspapers. Mononia, however, had too much good sense and keen humour to become easily enraptured with her own poetic efforts; and, indeed, it sometimes came upon her with a positive sense of terror that her father's fatal gift of literary amateurism, if we may coin such a word, might have descended to her brother and herself. But she certainly had literary ambition, and she still hoped and believed that she had some gifts which might bring a share of success in the field of literature, if only, as the first condition of success, she could shake herself free from the enervating influence which leads young beginners in provincial circles to believe themselves persons of genius, because the friends in their immediate quarter have paid them compliments upon their work.

There were two rooms in Desmond Lodge between which Mononia usually divided her leisure hours. One was the room which has already been described as her own, and the other was the apartment known by the impressive name of the library. Mononia's room was a small, rather neatly furnished study, with a solid square table in the middle scattered over with books and writing-paper and pages of manuscript and quill pens. There were vases of flowers here and there, and in one corner there stood a small harp of the old Irish fashion. The one large window of this room looked out upon the lawn and river. Over the chimney-piece, in which now a fire was burning, hung a portrait of Mononia's mother by a local artist of some skill; and two or three framed engravings from famous pictures ornamented the walls. To do Mr. Desmond justice, it must be said that, when he made his daughter a present of an engraving, it was sure to be the engraving of a picture deserving artistic study, and in itself and even as an engraving a work of art. The furniture of the room was simple and plain enough; it was solid and antique-looking, and somehow called up in the mind of a visitor the idea that it might have belonged to a grandmother or great-grandmother of the present occupant, when the former occupant, too, was a young and pretty woman.

Mononia had been trying to write at the table. She was translating an ode from Petrarch,— a favourite poet with young ladies of that day,— but it seemed as if inspiration did not come at her call, and as if she were too impatient that day to wait long for inspiration. She had thrown down her pen several times, and gone to the window and looked out upon the river. She turned away and stood before her mother's portrait, and then went back to her literary attempts again, and again turned impatiently from them. In truth, her mind was filled with the task which she and her brother had set them-

selves to attempt, and which she had determined that they must accomplish. She had made up her mind that the work of undertaking to talk the whole subject over with her father and prevail upon him to see the realities of things and let himself be guided by a clearer purpose and a stronger will than his own had better be left in her hands rather than in those of her brother. She dreaded, above all things, the possibility of a quarrel between the elder and the younger Desmond; and she knew that there was a kind of old-fashioned and partly artificial chivalry about Mr. Desmond which would lead him to be as gracious as he possibly could in all his dealings with a woman, even though she were his daughter, and even though she took upon her to urge the breaking up of all the dear, delightful easy life he had been leading so long, and the starting of some new, highly uncomfortable, and altogether prosaic and hard-working life, to be lived perhaps in shabby lodgings looking into a narrow back street.

While these thoughts were distracting her from her literary occupation, she received a still further distraction by the entrance of the woman servant, who came to tell her that Masther Phil Colston was at the door, and would Miss Mononia be kind enough to see him. It may be said that the whole indoor domestic service in the house was conducted by an elderly follower of the family and his wife. There was occasional help given in the way of jobs at gardening and boat-mending, in jobs done by ready hands from the outside; but Murtagh Ryan and his wife Mary filled the parts of butler, cook, groom, and housemaid between them.

## CHAPTER III

### "LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM"

THE entrance of Phil Colston brought Mononia's thoughts away in a moment from her efforts at Petrarch and the brooding home troubles which were distracting these efforts. A light, partly of pleasure, partly of surprise, came into her eyes at the sudden announcement of his presence,—a presence which was with her almost before she had time to give order for his admission. Phil Colston was a tall young man of about three-and-twenty years of age. He was slender and sinewy and like Maurice Desmond had a good deal of the boating man in his appearance and in his movements. His hair, eyes, and complexion were dark. A stranger might readily have taken him for an Italian or a Spaniard; and, indeed, his family came from those western regions of Ireland on which long generations of Spanish settlement and of intermarriage between Irish and Spaniards have left their deep imprint to this day. Phil's deeply dark eyes beamed with enthusiasm as he held out his hand to the welcoming and yet hesitating Mononia.

"I have heard it all," he said in a tone of hardly subdued delight. "I have heard it all, Mononia. I have just been talking with Maurice, and he has told me everything. I am so glad."

"Told you everything, Phil?" with a look of some wonder at his enthusiasm. "Then you just tell it all over again to me, for as yet I don't quite know what it is all about. But, first, please, take the chair, and settle yourself down, and let me hear all about the startling revelations."

Philip seated himself, not without a certain impatience of manner, as if he thought the sitting down were an

act of unnecessary formality at such a moment. Mononia sat near him, and waited for his explanation. Now, however, the explanation seemed slow in coming; and Phil looked like one who had fully expected to be met half-way in his confidential outpouring.

"Come," said Mononia, "tell me all about it. I am longing to hear, and you are fond of discoursing about women's curiousity."

"But you must know very well what I came to talk about," Phil replied; and he ran his hand through his thick dark hair as if the action had something restraining or moderating in it. "I tell you, Mononia, it was good news,— the best I have heard for many a day."

"Well, Phil, you are, indeed, an enthusiast. I only wish I could see where the inspiration to enthusiasm comes in just at this moment and in all this trouble of ours."

"I say again it is the best news I have heard for a long time. I told Maurice so, and he felt with me; and you will feel with me, too, Mononia, when the suddenness of the thing is over. And, after all, it is you yourself who are bringing it about; and, by Jove, when I heard it, I did feel proud of knowing you. 'Yes,' I said to myself, 'that is a girl to be proud of and to put faith in.'"

Mononia smiled upon the young man a quiet, kindly smile, and there was a look of unconcealed affection in her eyes; but she still kept up the half-jesting tone of her voice.

"But, my dear boy," she said in playful remonstrance, "I don't quite understand just yet what reason I have given any one to be particularly proud of me. I suppose I know what you are talking about, too; and I guess what Maurice told you. But I don't quite see as yet why you should be so delighted about it all, and what there is for any of us to be proud."

"I am delighted, and I am proud of you," Philip declared fervently. "You have broken with the past; and you will not any longer put up with the shallow, hollow, ridiculous life of broken-down, shabby gentility which we are allowing to become the curse of this part of Ireland. Oh! I have been thinking over this sort of thing ever since I left old Conrad's school,—ay, and before I left it, too; for the brave old man himself put a good deal of the better feeling into my head and into my heart. I am sick of debts and display and pretension and shabby gentility. I am sick of the so-called Irish novels which picture us all for the benefit of the English public as if we were a nation of broken-down sporting landlords and comic peasants."

The young man was growing quite excited with his own eloquence. Mononia laid her hand gently on his arm as if in silent admonition. He checked himself for a moment, and then went on again.

"Well, you see, Mononia, Maurice had been telling me that you and he are determined—and it comes first from your inspiration, he said—to lift your dear old father out of this ignoble mess of debts and difficulties and needless expense which is a trouble to so many families of our acquaintance. I am glad to hear it, and I am proud to hear it. But then, Mononia," and here his deep, soft, musical voice thrilled with a peculiarly pathetic tone, "I am afraid there is something selfish, very selfish, in the gladness I felt when Maurice told me the good news. You will hardly believe it, Mononia; but it is true all the same. I am selfishly glad, I am glad on my own account, to hear the good news. Mononia, can't you guess the reason why?"

Mononia turned her eyes away, and looked fixedly at the carpet. Once or twice she made an effort to speak, and then checked herself. There was a moment's pause; and Mononia, while she still looked at the carpet, felt

that the young man's eyes were fixed upon her. Then she looked quietly towards him, and said:—

"I knew you would be glad, Phil, because you take a brother's interest in Maurice and in me, and you think that this resolve of ours is right; and you are glad, as if it were some good thing happening to yourself, and that is what you mean when you call it selfish. But nobody in the world has a nature more unselfish than yours, and I have always seen this in you."

"Mononia, you do not really believe that I have only a brother's interest in you? Come, come, you must have known better than that this long time now. You know that my love for you is not a brother's love. Don't be offended, don't be angry with me, don't try to make me believe that you never knew this until now."

He took her hand in his, and she did not draw the hand away.

"You know that I love you," he repeated; and his eyes gazed into hers with an intensity of expression which she could hardly sustain.

"Yes, Phil," she said in a soft, low voice, "we know each other too well for me to try to pass myself off on you as anything other than what I am or to hide any of my feelings from you. Yes, Phil, I have believed of late that you were growing to love me."

"Growing to love you! Mononia, I think I must have begun by loving you. I must have loved you since we were boy and girl together, and when I could hardly have known what love really meant. I cannot remember, since first I saw you, any time when I did not love you. I knew that I must tell you some time, and lately I began to hope that you were coming to know it without my telling you in so many set words."

"Yes, Phil, I have been coming to know it of late. Until lately I never thought about it. I was fond of you as I was fond of Maurice; and I never asked my

heart any questions about it, but let the days go on, and was fond of you both and happy. Lately things have been different with me. I have come to believe that your feeling for me was not merely like the love of a brother for his sister."

"And you were not angry with me?" Phil asked eagerly. "You were not offended, you did not want to send me away from you? Speak to me, Mononia, and tell me."

"I did not want to send you away from me, Phil; and I was not angry when I began to think that you loved me. I was proud and glad of it; for I love you, Phil."

The young man sprang from his chair, and moved towards her as if he were about to embrace her; but she rose and drew back from him, and motioned to him, with a peculiarly modest and graceful action of command, to keep his place.

"Come now, Phil," she said tenderly, "if you really love me"—

"You have told me that you know I love you."

"Then, if you do love me, you must want to please me; and my one great desire now is that you should listen to reason, and that we should both talk this out like a pair of rational human beings."

"I love you so much, Mononia, that I can positively consent even at this moment to talk and act like a rational human being, if you insist upon it. You have made me so happy that I can even put up with being rational, since you so wish it."

"I do, indeed, so wish it," she said. "It is absolutely necessary that you and I should face this crisis in our fortunes like rational human beings, and should see our way. Come now, sit down again." She pointed to his chair; and Phil sat down again, rather hesitatingly and awkwardly for a young man endowed with so much natural grace of movement. Then Mononia also resumed her seat.

"Now," she said, "first of all, I want to know all about this selfish joy of yours. Why were you so glad, selfishly or unselfishly, that a crisis is coming in the life of Maurice and of me? I speak to you, Phil, with a complete frankness which I suppose girls who have been better brought up than I would consider highly unbecoming and unmaidenly and very shocking and all that sort of thing. Very likely such well-disciplined young women would say that, if my mother had lived, she would have taught me better. Well, I don't know — perhaps she would — but she seemed to me all love and truthfulness. Well, no matter, I must be truthful, too. I know that you love me, Phil, and I know that I love you; and I must be truthful above all things. But, still, I want to know why I should make you selfishly glad that this trouble should have come on the life of dear Maurice and of me?"

"Can't you guess,— can't you really guess?" the young man asked impetuously.

"Perhaps I might guess, but perhaps I might guess wrongly; and, anyhow, I don't feel in a mood just now for exercising my ingenuity in guesses. We are not exactly playing a game of twenty questions, are we?"

The smile which brightened the habitual melancholy of Mononia's face awakened a sympathetic gleam in the young man's dark eyes, and for the first time during their short talk he turned to her with a look of boyish cheeriness.

"Come, then, I'll tell you all about it," he said; "and you shall see what a very good boy I am. I am selfishly glad of this crisis in your affairs, of this trouble in your life, as you call it, because it gives me an opportunity of bringing you out of the trouble and of doing the very thing which it is the great longing of my life to do. Mononia, you can make me a perfectly happy man at this very moment. I love you. You are good and sweet

and brave enough to care about me. Will you marry me, Mononia? That is coming to the point, is it not?"

"And leave my father and Maurice to get out of their trouble the best way they can or to remain in it?" she asked in a low, soft voice.

"No, no, nothing of the kind: that would be selfish, indeed. You know I didn't mean that, Mononia. No, you shall become my wife, and you and I will take the guidance of affairs; and Maurice will work with us, and we'll open out a new life, and among us we'll make your father a happier man than ever he was before. We'll get him out of his debts and his troubles, and we'll create a happy home for him away from shabby gentility and absurd imitation of the doings of people who look down upon us; and we'll make names for ourselves, you and Maurice and I, and we'll try to do some good for our poor old country, and be worthy of her, and perhaps, some day, she may come to believe that we have done her good service, and that the name of Mononia was not given to you in vain."

Mononia smiled upon the impetuous young man,—a smile which had tenderness and even compassion in it. She was younger than he by some years; but at that moment she felt as if she were the elder of the two, and were, in fact, the guiding spirit. A young woman often feels like this to her enthusiastic lover, though he may have come into the world a few years in advance of her, especially when she is a young woman who, like Mononia, has had some of the economic realities of life brought to her knowledge at home. While Phil Colston was dreaming and declaiming about a career to be accomplished and a country to be redeemed, Mononia, into whose heart and mind also such ideas had often come, was in the habit of finding herself confronted every week by the prosaic, pitiful necessity of making the two ends meet.

"And in the mean time, dear enthusiast," she said, "how do you propose that you and I and my father and Maurice are to find the means of living? I don't believe our love would grow cold, even though the food and the wine were to run short; but even lovers must eat and drink, I suppose, to say nothing of their fathers and brothers."

"Dearest Mononia, you talk as if I had no capacity for making a living and no prospects whatever. Do you think I am going to sit idly down and wait for good fortune to come and knock at my door? Why, you dear, prudent, doubting girl, do you forget that I am to be called to the bar next term, and that my uncle has promised to give me all his influence to help me on my way? You have told me yourself scores of times that you think I shall make my way as an advocate. No words of praise have ever inspired me one tithe as yours have done, and now all in a moment you seem to think I haven't the brains to make a living."

Mononia smiled again, and touched his hand tenderly.

"But I suppose," she said, "it took your uncle some time before he began to make a living; and how much longer would it have taken him if he had had a young wife depending on him and cramping his mental activity by absorbing thoughts about her comforts and the means of meeting the weekly bills? Do you think I am so selfish a creature, so much in love with my own love for you, as to think of nothing but my own impulses and my own happiness, and to make myself a helpless human millstone round your neck? And then — stay now, don't break out again for a while — you have spoken about your uncle's influence as a means of promoting your career to the bar. Does your uncle know anything about your goings-on down here? Does he know that you have become a member of the Young Ireland Confederation? Has he heard anything about your recent

speeches in the city, do you think? Some of the speeches I so greatly admired, and they did stir my very heart, Phil, and I felt proud of you; but what would your uncle have thought if he had heard them? Is he not the most loyal devotee of the British government? Do we not all know that he expects soon to be made a judge? Can his nephew count on much of his influence to help him on his way when his nephew has proclaimed himself an utter disbeliever in the blessings of the British Constitution?"

"I care nothing about my uncle's influence: I will go my own way; and I tell you, Mononia, I will make my own way, no matter what my uncle may think of my politics. You know that of me, Mononia. You could not love me if I were a man who could change his political principles to please his rich relations."

"Indeed, I know well, dear Phil, that you are not such a man. I never could have loved you or thought of you in that way if you were such a man; but you spoke of your uncle's influence, and I only want to remind you that your uncle is a devoted loyalist, while you seem to have inherited from some ancestor or other the spirit of a downright rebel, and I don't see how any other inheritance is likely to come to you just now."

"I am afraid you are right enough about my uncle," Philip said rather ruefully. "He has always been ever so good and kind to me; but of course I know there will be the devil to pay — at least, I mean there will be a bit of a quarrel — when he finds that I am not going to tread along the path which leads to a public appointment. I forgot all about that for the moment. I kept thinking of my uncle as I have always known him, as a generous relative and protector. I know I can't look to him any more. But I shall fight my own way, Mononia; and I shall fight it infinitely the better if I have you at my side to cheer me and encourage me on,

and to keep me in the right path. Don't you remember," and here his voice seemed for a moment to take a quieter and more cheery tone,—"don't you remember the old familiar anecdote about Erskine and his first brief?"

"Oh, yes, I remember all about it," Mononia answered with a smile, and at the same time a slight colour mounted to her cheeks, as she recalled to mind the story of the inspiration given to the young advocate's courage by his sudden fancy about the wife and young children clinging to his gown; "but I am afraid that is one of the stories which are invented for the successful man after he has made his success. Anyhow, I don't mean to let you run any such risks, dear Phil. I love you far too much for that; and I think that is only a poor love which seeks the gratification of its heart's desire without any thought for the abiding interest of the other one whose future also is involved. No, no, you shall be free to make your way, unhampered by me; and I shall be only all the more proud of your success when I remember that you have taken some account of my guidance on the way to accomplish it. Now, now, don't try to talk me over, Phil. My mind is clear on this; and you know me well enough to know that in these things I am a true woman, who will have her own way when she has set her mind and heart upon it."

"But what are we to do in the mean time?" he asked despairingly. "What am I to do?"

"We must wait and hope," Mononia replied, "as your favourite hero, Monte Cristo, tells his friends to do. It is as hard for me to bear as it is for you, dearest Phil; but I will help you to bear it, and you shall help me. We have our love to comfort us and keep our hearts alive, and we are both young. You are too young to marry even under the most benignant condi-

tions; and we shall not have long to wait,— I know we shall not. To wait and hope ought to be an easy task, when the hope is like ours."

And then Philip said sadly, and as if he were murmuring the words to himself, "Suppose after some time — after a few years, let us say — that for some reason or other I do not seem to make much way at the bar, and that I fail to justify the hopes of my friends and of you, Mononia, and that only a life of undistinguished plodding is before me?"

"Then," said the girl, and, rising from her chair, she approached him and touched his forehead with her lips, — "then Mononia will come to you of her own accord, and tell you that the best thing for us under such conditions is to share the undistinguished plodding, and to make the best of it as husband and wife."

Philip sprang from his seat and clasped her hands in his, and looked into her face, unable, for the moment, to form a single word because of his utter happiness. He must have felt some impulse to give her back with passion her quiet kiss; but he controlled the impulse, and stood and gazed into her face. Perhaps he felt that the compact Mononia had sealed for him was too sacred for the immemorial raptures of the lover whose love-suit now only awaits its legalised sanction. At last he spoke.

"You have made me happy, Mononia. I can face the world now and fight the world, too, if needs be, after such a promise as you have given me."

"Then you are content to wait and hope?" Mononia asked, and she laid her hand tenderly upon his shoulder.

"There is no case of waiting and hoping," Phil replied. "I have your love; and what I wait for is not the hope, but the certainty of the time when you will tell me I may come to you."

At that moment the voice of Mr. Desmond was

heard as the chief of the house of Desmond was apparently ascending the stairs.

"My father has returned, and you must stay and meet him, Phil. He is sure to come in here, and he is always glad to see you."

"I don't think he would be very glad to see me if he knew what his daughter and I had just been telling each other," Phil replied, with a bright smile of almost boyish self-content. "I suppose we must not tell him anything about it just yet, Mononia?"

"No, not just yet. He shall know in good time; but for the hour, Phil, it had better be a secret from every one but you and me and Maurice. My father will have other things to think of just now."

"Yes, and I don't suppose he would much care to see me at the present moment. I think I had better go, Mononia. I had rather not talk with anybody but you for some hours to come; and, as I can't have you, I prefer to have nobody. One word, however. You are going to old Carey's party to-morrow night, are you not?"

"Yes, my father is dining there; and he wishes me to go in the evening. We shall meet there, Phil."

"Yes, and we are engaged for the first quadrille and the first valse, and as many dances after as I can persuade you into giving me," Phil said in a gladsome tone; "and you will sing, Mononia, and you will bring your harp?"

"Yes, I shall sing specially for you, and at you, Phil, — some song that will have only a commonplace drawing-room meaning for all the others in the room, but will tell you something for yourself, and only for yourself, and so good-by."

Not another word was spoken; and only a clasp of hands was interchanged as the two lovers parted,— to wait and hope.

Phil had gone but a moment when Mary Ryan again made her appearance in the room. She came to announce to Mononia that her father was anxious to see her in the library. Mr. Desmond liked to conduct all his domestic arrangements after the stately fashion befitting the owner of Desmond Lodge; and, therefore, instead of carelessly dropping into his daughter's room, he preferred to send to her the formal announcement that he was awaiting her presence in the library. Mononia felt that a critical moment had come to her. She assumed that her father was alone in the library, and she thought that no time could be more suitable for the beginning of that task which she had taken upon herself, — the task of endeavouring to rouse his attention to the crisis in their fortunes which was once again arising, and to the absolute necessity imposed by reason and honour of meeting this crisis in a new way, and of beginning bravely a life of independence. When she entered the library, however, she found, somewhat to her surprise, that her father was not there. He was sure to come very soon, she assumed; for Mr. Desmond's antique courtesy of manner would not allow him to keep anybody, even his daughter, too long in unnecessary waiting.

The library was only a room of very moderate dimensions, and it contained but a few dozen books. These books, however, were all carefully assorted in illustration of Mr. Desmond's well-cultured taste, and, indeed, were books which, to use a phrase even then becoming classic, with a serious meaning for some and a humourous meaning for others,— books such as no gentleman's library ought to be without. Homer was there, of course, both in the original and in Pope's translation; and the Greek tragedians were there, but not Aristophanes, for Mr. Desmond considered Aristophanes rather an improper sort of book, and, anyhow, could never see any

fun in it. Virgil and Horace were there, but not Lucretius. Shakespeare represented the Elizabethan drama, and Boswell's *Life of Johnson* stood for English prose literature down to the period of the Waverley novels. There was a gorgeous edition of Byron in many volumes, illustrated with steel engravings from pictures and drawings of scenes which Byron had visited. Mr. Desmond was a devoted admirer of Byron. Thomas Moore was there; but Shelley, Keats, and Wordsworth were not. The whole of the Waverley novels were arranged on the shelves; but Mr. Desmond had not yet recognised the rising claims of Charles Dickens. Ellis's *True History of the Iron Mask* and Barry O'Meara's *Voice from St. Helena*, describing the captivity of Napoleon, were among Mr. Desmond's most favoured historical volumes. A plaster bust of Charles James Fox, for whom Mr. Desmond had an especial veneration, stood, perhaps significantly, above the shelf which contained the edition of Byron and Barry O'Meara's melancholy record of the exile days in St. Helena.

Mononia was glancing listlessly over the backs of some of those familiar volumes, when the door suddenly opened and her father came in. A shadow of surprise passed over Mononia's face, and yet, perhaps, for all her nerve and courage, a sense of relief came into her heart; for her father was not alone, and the crisis must, therefore, be put off at least for the moment. Mr. Desmond came in accompanied by Mr. Christopher Woodward, a man already well known to Mononia, an Englishman who had long settled in the seaport city as the representative of a great English firm of traders in fruit.

"Mononia, my dear," Mr. Desmond said with elaborate courtesy and a formal wave of his hand, as if he were making presentation of Mr. Woodward for the

first time, "our friend Mr. Woodward has kindly consented, at my informal and sudden request, to honour us with his company at dinner this evening. He has explained to me that he wishes to have a few words of conversation with you, Mononia, on a subject which, he assured me, is of much interest to him. I am sure you will feel highly honoured, as I do, by any such request coming from him; and, as he desires some quiet conversation with you, I cannot do better than leave you both in full possession of the library for the present."

## CHAPTER IV

### A PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE

MR. CHRISTOPHER WOODWARD was a man of about forty-two, who had been for some years a widower with one son, Willie, a clever boy of fifteen, who was a great favourite with the Desmond household, and with Phil Colston, and was at present taking lessons in Greek and Latin at Mr. Conrad's school. Willie Woodward might almost have been called a pet of Mononia's, and was free to pass as many of his evenings as he liked in her room, when she happened to be at home. He might come to tea without any formal invitation; and it may be well to explain, for the instruction of modern readers, that to come to tea was not the same sort of visit or social ceremonial as the five o'clock tea of our own days. The tea-table was then spread somewhere between eight and nine o'clock, and often began before the gentlemen in the dining-room had yet completed their more elaborate meal. As Twelfth Day used to be called the women's Christmas, so the evening tea might, without much inaccuracy of statement, be termed the women's dinner party.

Mr. Christopher Woodward was regarded with much personal interest by Mononia for two especial reasons. He was the father of her young friend Willie, and he was the first Englishman with whom she had ever been on any terms of close acquaintanceship. Her feelings, therefore, towards him, were entirely friendly; and as Mr. Desmond seldom came home to dinner unless when he had invited or when he brought some one to dine with him, Mononia was, on the whole, very well pleased that Mr. Woodward should be the guest this time. Moreover, as has been said already, his coming

put off for the moment the inevitable explanation, and thus brought to her a certain sense of relief. She knew that she would have gone on with the explanation at once if Mr. Woodward had not presented himself; and, of course, it was no fault of hers that he did present himself. And, therefore, her conscience told her that she was entitled, without any keen sense of self-reproach, to enjoy the respite which she had not sought to obtain. Even the severest moralist may acknowledge that, if we are quite determined to undertake a disagreeable task, and some interposition over which we have no control compels us to postpone the unpleasant duty, we may indulge in a momentary elevation of spirits without scruple of conscience or dread of remorse. These sentences of philosophical dissertation are to be excused only on the grounds that they enable the reader to understand why Mr. Woodward read unmistakable welcome in the glance which greeted him from Mononia's dark eyes. No wonder that he saw an encouraging omen in that glance. He had not the advantage of knowing what Mononia had been thinking about just before he entered the library.

Mr. Woodward was a tall man with fair hair already growing thin over the temples, with good features, and with a fine set of teeth which he seemed fond of displaying. He had the closely shaven chin and upper lip and the mutton-chop whiskers which had not yet developed or depressed themselves into the "Piccadilly Weepers" of a later date. He wore an eyeglass which he kept always fixed in one eye, after a fashion then somewhat new to the inhabitants of the southern city. Altogether he looked a thoroughly respectable personage, quite correct in fashion, so far as that dim and distant time was concerned, and, indeed, a man who might well be excused if he considered himself rather attractive and captivating than otherwise. Mononia was

generally pleased to meet him, but his image certainly did not fill her mind during the intervals when they did not happen to meet.

The door had closed upon Mr. Desmond; and Mr. Woodward stood with his tall, shiny hat in his hand, gazing for a speechless moment or two at Mononia. Then he began with a solemnity which reminded Mononia oddly of the manner in which she had seen the spokesman of a civic deputation address her father on some subject concerning the municipal affairs of the city.

"Miss Desmond," he began, "my dear friend, your father has told you already that I have his full permission to pay you this formal visit."

"I am delighted to see you," replied the still-welcoming Mononia; "but please, Mr. Woodward, won't you take a seat?"

Mr. Woodward complied with the gracious request; and Mononia then noticed for the first time that he had a straw-coloured kid glove on one hand, while the companion glove, along with his hat, was in the other. She settled herself into a chair at an easy distance from him.

"Miss Desmond,"—he resumed his manner as spokesman of a deputation,—"you have not, I am sure, any conception of my purpose in thus obtaining the honour of this private interview with you, if indeed I may call it private, when its object has already been fully communicated to my esteemed friend, your father."

"I am delighted to see you, Mr. Woodward, and to speak with you on any subject," Mononia said rather uneasily; for she began to fear that he had some troublous news to break to her. "Is it anything about dear Willie? I have not seen him for some days past."

Mr. Woodward looked a little disappointed. He had not come with any news about Willie, and he did not particularly want to be reminded of Willie just at that moment.

"No, no," he replied somewhat hurriedly. "It was not about Willie that I came to speak with you." Then, with a more genial smile passing over his well-cut features, he went on, "No, Miss Desmond, I want to speak to you, not about Willie, but about Willie's father."

Mononia looked at him in blank amazement. She had not the most remote idea that there could be any common subject of much interest between this thoroughly respectable and influential gentleman and herself. She said nothing, for the good reason that she could think of nothing to say.

"Miss Desmond," he began again, "may I take the liberty of an old friend, and call you Mononia?"

"Why, of course, Mr. Woodward, if you wish it. Why not? Surely, you have often called me Mononia, have you not?"

"Yes, yes; but just now I do particularly wish it. May I call you Mononia now?"

"Dear Mr. Woodward, call me Mononia as often as you like. Your boy sometimes calls me Mononia, but not so often as I could wish; for he generally calls me Nony, which I don't like, and I am afraid the naughty boy only does it the more just to annoy me."

If Mononia had any hope that she might brighten the conversation by this attempt at an interlude, she found herself completely disappointed. Mr. Woodward went on with his former earnestness of tone:—

"Mononia, can you form no idea of my purpose in coming to see you this day, and obtaining this private talk with you? Can you form no idea? Can you make no guess?"

"Indeed, indeed, Mr. Woodward," Mononia said, now beginning to feel rather alarmed, and wondering if anything was going wrong with Mr. Woodward's intellect, "I can form no idea whatever; and my brother says I am the worst girl in the world at guessing anything. I

am sure your purpose is something kind and friendly to me and mine, for I know that you are our friend; and do please relieve my bewilderment, and tell me all about it."

"My purpose is friendly to you," he said slowly, "but not to you alone."

Then it suddenly flashed upon Mononia's mind that this was only a reopening of the old familiar chapter. Mr. Woodward had heard that her father was in money troubles, and he had formed some plan for getting him out of it. The old, old story! Another friendly arrangement, another rally of good-natured citizens, led off this time by Mr. Woodward, to help Desmond Lodge out of its difficulties. Mononia's face assumed an expression of unwilling patience. She must hear him out, and then tell him decisively that she had made up her mind, and that she and her brother were determined not any longer to live by the generous arrangements of their friends.

"Mononia," said Mr. Woodward, "I have told your father; and it is with his full consent that I have come to tell you what I am now going to say."

"Yes," thought poor Mononia to herself, with a deepened sense of humiliation, "I am afraid it is by his consent; but this shall be the last time."

"Mononia," said Mr. Woodward, rising from his chair, putting down his hat and glove, and standing before her, "I have come to tell you that I love you with all my heart, that I have been in love with you this long time, and to ask you to be my wife."

Mononia, too, rose from her chair, and looked at him utterly bewildered. Never, perhaps, again in her life can she experience a surprise like that. No sudden revelation could ever again be anything but an anti-climax after that. Her first inclination was a horrible desire to burst into a fit of laughter. This fearful rising impulse, however, she trampled down; and then again

came the distressing idea that Mr. Woodward must be going out of his mind. Mr. Woodward, the serious, respectable, rich Mr. Woodward, the influential citizen who took the chair at so many meetings of commercial associations in the city, Mr. Woodward, her father's friend, whom she had always looked upon as if he were a man of somewhere about her father's age,— above all, Mr. Woodward, the father of her dear young friend Willie,— could he possibly be in his right senses when he came to offer her his heart and hand?

"Mr. Woodward," she appealed to him in words the most utterly prosaic, "what on earth put this idea into your head? Are you really serious?"

"I am really and truly serious, dear Mononia. I have studied you closely for years back, have admired your intellect and your noble nature, and have come to love you; and I want you to be my wife. I know I can make you happy. At least, I think I can make you happy; and certainly I will do everything in my power. I am not an old man, Mononia. There is nothing in my age which could make it a surprising thing that I should marry a girl even as young as you; and I can offer you a comfortable home,— indeed, I might almost say a luxurious home,— and a home with you for my wife would be a very happy home for me. Come, my dear young lady, do think what it is to make a man happy, and let your generous heart guide you."

"Mr. Woodward," Mononia said gravely, "I think you said that you have told my father all about this."

"Yes, and I have his full consent. He entirely approves of my idea, and he told me I might say as much to you. Indeed, I think I may venture to tell you that he will be much disappointed if I do not succeed in prevailing on you to accept my proposal."

A flush passed over Mononia's face, and there was a tone of anger in her voice as she said:—

"Don't you think, Mr. Woodward, it would have been better if you had spoken of this first to me? Don't you think that, if a woman is old enough to be married, she is old enough to be consulted on such a matter in the first instance? I have not been much in the way of receiving offers of marriage, but I believe women like to have an opportunity of saying yes or no according to their own inclinations."

"Yes, yes," he replied hastily; "but then I thought, as I have known your father so long and as you were only a little girl when I first knew you, that it was better to make sure of his approval, and to come to you with his sanction."

"And so bringing paternal authority to bear upon me? Was this quite fair to a young woman, do you think?"

"There was no idea of bringing pressure to bear upon you. I only wanted to be able to tell you that I had your father's sanction. Now I put myself entirely at your disposal. It is for you, Mononia, to say yes or no."

"Then I have only to say no! Mr. Woodward, the thing is utterly out of the question."

"But come now, do not be too hasty. Do not make up your mind without thinking the matter over. Why should it be out of the question? You are not a romantic school-girl who thinks that every man of forty is old enough to be her grandfather. My heart has not grown old, and I don't think I look a very aged personage. Why should it be out of the question?"

"Because I never thought of you in that light. I never could think of you in such a way. I only thought of you as my father's friend and dear Willie's father. Oh! I am so sorry for all this."

"But you do not hate me or even dislike me?"

"No, I like you very much. I have always liked you, but I never fancied for a moment that you could

have any such ideas about me; and it is utterly impossible. Mr. Woodward, do let us say no more about it. I will try to forget it, and we shall be the same good friends as ever."

"But this," he pleaded, "is only what all young women say when they receive their first offer of marriage." An involuntary expression which came into Mononia's face checked him for a moment. "I mean, when they receive any proposal of marriage, they always begin by saying they never thought of the man in that light, and never supposed for a moment that he could be in love with them and all that sort of thing. But you will grow to care about me, and I will show you that I am not unworthy of you. Life shall be made very pleasant and bright for you; and you will come to like me, and even perhaps to love me in the end. Think it over. Don't give me an answer now. I am in no hurry. I can wait, and you are well worth waiting for. Take your time, and give me an answer some other day."

There was something sincere and manly in Mr. Woodward's voice and looks as he made this rather lengthened speech which impressed Mononia with a sense of respect and regard for him. Moreover, as the speech was rather long, it gave her time to collect herself. "I must," she thought, "give him some kind of answer which will not annoy him too much or seem as if I thought him merely ridiculous." Then she spoke aloud.

"Mr. Woodward, there is no question about your age in this. I should have to make the same answer if you were only five-and-twenty. Why, if there were no other difficulties in the way, how could an Irish girl of my views consent to marry an Englishman?"

"Good God! Miss Desmond," the astonished Woodward exclaimed, startled entirely out of his lover-like familiarity of address by this extraordinary question.

"What on earth has the fact of my being an Englishman to do with my offer of marriage? Why, I know lots of Englishmen who have married Irish girls, and made them perfectly happy. It isn't quite a case of Vortigern and Rowena or that sort of thing. We don't have those feelings about hostile races in our practical modern days."

"Some Irish girls perhaps are not very practical, and I suppose I am one of them. You may have seen — I think you must have seen — that there is a great revival of national feeling in this country; and I sometimes feel myself terribly and aggressively Irish. Our people are enemies, Mr. Woodward. You can't help it, and neither can I; but it would never do for you, a steady Englishman, proud of his country and given over to all her ways, to introduce to his home an Irish girl who is a rebel in her heart."

"But there is no talk of rebelling now. The times are changed. We are all friends together."

"We never can be friends while Irishmen feel as they do and Englishmen act as they do."

"But, my dear Miss Desmond, I have lived among Irishmen a great many years of my life, and we are the best of friends. Besides, a new race of Irishmen and of Englishmen is growing up side by side. A great political party of Englishmen is coming to the front who have nothing to do with the old traditions of oppression and of Toryism,— a party of Englishmen who are on the side of freedom in England against its old enemies, and who are thoroughly with you in your efforts to secure good government for your people. You have heard of Richard Cobden and of John Bright and of Fox."

Mononia had not been following quite closely these latest sentences of her admirer. But it was a relief to her to draw him into a political and not a personal controversy; and at the same time she could not help feel-

ing a certain admiration for the manhood of his demeanour and for the genuine earnestness in his voice and his expression. The last word of his sentence suddenly aroused her attention.

"Fox!" she exclaimed. "Oh, yes! I have often heard of Fox. My father greatly admired him,— see, there is his bust on that shelf; but he has been dead this long time, has he not?"

Woodward smiled at her question. It gave him probably a feeling of satisfaction, a certain sense of masculine superiority, to have the chance of offering to this brilliant and handsome girl a little instruction in living politics.

"Yes, that was Charles James Fox," he said; "but I am speaking of a younger man, a man newly come into politics,— William Johnson Fox,— one who promises to be a greater orator, and who is on the side of peace and freedom along with Cobden and Bright. These are the Englishmen of to-day, Miss Desmond; and among these you can only find friends. Come now, will you give me a hearing and let me plead my cause, my own personal cause, with you once more?"

He held out both hands towards her, but she did not approach him. She felt that the moment had come when she could no longer refuse to give a direct answer to his question.

"Mr. Woodward," she said, "it is no use our trying to talk this matter over any longer. I must give you my answer, and you must take it from me as the only one I can give. I have formed too high an opinion of you, even since you came into this room, to put you off with vain excuses or useless delays. I feel the sincerest friendship for you, and I know that you deserve my admiration. But it is all of no use. I could not marry you, Mr. Woodward, and for the best of all reasons,— I could not love you."

"But in time," he pleaded,— "you might come in time"—

"It never could be, and you have been so kind to me that the least I can do is to tell you the full truth. Mr. Woodward, I have given my whole heart to another man."

Woodward drew back in utter amazement. He had not supposed that she could be in love with him, but it had not come into his mind that a girl must refuse a really good offer of marriage merely because she was not as yet particularly in love with the man who made the offer. He had never heard any talk which associated her name with that of a professing lover. She had always seemed to be friendly, very friendly, with the young men who came into her society, but he never supposed that she was in love with any one of them; and then they all seemed to him such very young men, mere boys, in fact, and none of them, so far as he knew, had the means of making a decent settlement on any girl. He could only say:—

"This is indeed a surprise. I had never heard of anything of the kind. Are you sure that your heart is quite set on this? Is your mind made up on accepting this other man?"

"My mind is quite made up, Mr. Woodward. I shall marry that other, or I shall never marry any one. Nothing can happen, perhaps, for a long while; but we are both willing to wait."

"Would it be unfair of me to ask his name? I only want to know whether he is really worthy of you, and whether you are not sacrificing yourself to some generous girlish impulse. Don't think me rude or inquisitive. I wish I could make you happy; but I am anxious about your happiness, in any case, and even although I am not to have the making of it."

"No, I cannot tell you his name," she said quietly.

"My resolve is only known to him and me. You will know it some time, and before long, I hope; but as yet I have not made it known even to my father and my brother."

"Your father will be disappointed," Woodward said, looking at her with an expression which was certainly not unkindly. "I think I can tell you that much, at least, Miss Desmond,— he will be disappointed."

Mononia turned sharply, and spoke with something like anger in her voice.

"Yes, I suppose he will be disappointed; and he will blame me and think me foolish,— I can well believe that. He will be angry with me, I daresay; but I shall have to bear it, and I shall bear it. Good-evening, Mr. Woodward. We need not talk of this any longer, or ever again."

"Come now," Woodward replied, and he took kindly in his the hand which she held out to him in token of formal farewell. "I don't think you quite understand me. I did not speak of your father's disappointment with any idea of influencing your purpose. I only wanted to say that I shall do my best to save you from any further trouble about this unwelcome offer of mine. I shall take the blame all upon myself, if you will allow me, and if you will put the right interpretation on my course of action. I shall tell your father that you have given me a frank explanation of your political opinions; and that, after what I have heard, I do not think we could possibly get on together as man and wife. I shall tell him that I am convinced everything is for the best as it stands just now; and, whenever he first hears the true reason why my offer has come to nothing, it shall not be from me."

Mononia pressed his hand with a genuine feeling of gratitude.

"Mr. Woodward," she said, "you have acted like a

true gentleman, and you have shown a consideration for me which I can never forget. I thank you from my heart, and I shall always have a kindly feeling towards Englishmen because of the one Englishman I have known who has shown himself so generous and noble a friend to me."

"Then we part friends," Woodward said quietly.

"We are friends; and I hope we shall not part, but shall remain friends for all our lives."

"I take you at your word," Woodward said cheerily. "That is good and kind of you. Yes, we shall always be friends; and, in token of our friendship, I have one request to make you. I have to ask you to give me one promise. Don't be alarmed. It is not *the* promise."

"Tell me what it is," she said. "I am sure I shall be able to comply with any wish of yours now."

"Only this: that, if ever you or any one you care about should happen to be in trouble or difficulty or danger, you will let me see whether I cannot be of some help. Yes, Mononia,"—he had dropped the formal Miss Desmond,—"you will promise this, will you not?"

"I promise it," Mononia replied, "with all my heart." She offered him her hand again. He raised it to his lips, and then gently let it go. He took his leave without another word; and Mononia was left alone for a while to meditate on the two offers of marriage which she had received on the same day.

## CHAPTER V

### A SMALL DINNER-PARTY

MONONIA had not much time left, however, to spend in meditation on the events which had befallen her that day. She remembered that Mr. Woodward had been invited to dinner. The ordinary dinner hour was fast approaching, and she must make some preparation to receive her guest in becoming fashion. When Mr. Desmond brought home a friend, or friends, to dinner on a sudden and informal invitation, there was no idea of dressing for the meal, so far as the men of the party were concerned. But the young ladies of the household were expected in those days to appear at dinner, even if only the members of the family were present, in low-necked dresses and with short sleeves. While Mononia was dressing, she was wondering to herself whether Mr. Woodward might not find it expedient, under the conditions, to give some excuse to his host and take his departure rather than spend his evening with the household after what had happened; and she was wondering, too, whether, on the whole, it would be more agreeable to her that Mr. Woodward should remain or that he should go away. She knew enough of her father's code of good breeding and decorum to know that until the family meal was over he would not bring up any unpleasant subject of discussion, even though only Maurice and she were at dinner with him. But her heart almost sank within her at the prospect of a family meal consumed under such conditions, and with the inevitable summons to the library as soon as the dinner ceremonial had been completely got through. On the whole, then, she felt relieved when, on descending to the drawing-room, she found that Mr. Woodward was a guest; and she felt a full conviction that he had

remained because he believed that his hasty departure would only have made things more unpleasant for her.

Mr. Desmond belonged to an old-fashioned school of politeness. The guiding principle of his life, so far as manners were concerned, was that no note of family discord must ever be struck in the presence of strangers or of servants. He had a fixed detestation for anything resembling what he would have described as a scene enacted by the members of a family circle in the presence of any spectators. Mononia, therefore, felt quite certain that everything would go on smoothly enough so long as Mr. Woodward remained, and in the present disturbed condition of her nerves she could not help feeling a hope that Mr. Woodward might remain for a considerable length of time after dinner. The group at dinner consisted of the three members of the family and the guest. Mr. Desmond sat at the head of the table, and had a solid joint to carve from. Mononia faced him at the other end of the table, and had some light dish before her. Maurice was intrusted with the dispensation of a pair of fowls; and Mr. Woodward, according to the polite fashion of the day, took on himself the charge of the dish which had been formally confided to Mononia as hostess. Murtagh Ryan, in a black swallow-tail coat, acted as butler, and poured the liquors, which during dinner time consisted of sherry and claret. Murtagh sometimes disappeared from the room, and no doubt made himself busy by giving some needful help to his wife in the kitchen; but during his intervals of absence, occasionally rather prolonged, Mr. Desmond always gracefully spoke as if a whole retinue of servants were in attendance. For instance, if he desired to invite Mr. Woodward to partake of some particular dish, he was always politely careful to ask, "Shall I send you a little of this?" thereby delicately conveying the idea that

a liveried menial was standing in readiness to pass the plate.

Mr. Desmond was a good talker, although somewhat formal and florid in his style. The conversation turned principally on subjects connected with literature and art, for Mr. Desmond did not regard it as quite becoming on the part of gentlemen to discuss political questions in the presence of ladies or even of one lady. Mr. Desmond, it should be said, never spoke of women when he was making reference to feminine beings of his own order: women were always ladies with him unless they belonged, admittedly and avowedly, to the humbler classes of society. He had never allowed his children to speak of their parents as papa and mamma. On this point he was dogmatic. He argued, not perhaps without some show of reason, that all the laws of poetry disallowed and condemned such vulgar expressions of endearment. "Only think," he was wont to say, "of Miranda uttering such words as 'Oh, my papa, I have broke your hest!'; or, worse still, think of Hamlet appealing to his surviving parent in such terms as 'Mamma, you have my papa much offended.'" He was fond of quotations from Horace, and really appeared to have a very sincere appreciation of the poet. It was one of his familiar pleasantries to declare that he was always sorry Horace had lived before the invention of tobacco smoking, and that some of the most characteristic lines from Carmina seemed as if they ought to have been composed between the puffs of a fine-flavoured cigar.

If there was anything troubling Mr. Desmond on this particular evening, he certainly did not show it in his manner during dinner. He led the conversation on to a subject of interest to them all,—the success of the new debating society which had been started in the city, and of which Maurice Desmond, Phil Colston, and most

other young men of the same set were members. Mr. Desmond did not think very much of the rising young men of the day in any department of art, letters, or philosophy. He did not believe that young Mill would ever rival the celebrity of his father, the historian of British India; and he could not understand the praises which were commonly showered on Alfred Tennyson, whose poem, *The Princess*, he declared, he never could quite understand, not being certain whether it was meant for a satire on the movement in favour of woman's education or a glorification of that movement; and he commented severely on the enthusiastic praise which had been given to the poem by some of the young fellows in their debating society. This brought out Maurice into warm defence of his favourite; and, as the discussion became more animated, the elder Desmond and his son went up steadily in the proportions of their praise or disparagement, so that before the discussion had lasted long the elder Desmond was ready to proclaim that Tennyson had not the faintest gleam of poetic genius, and the younger Desmond declared that Tennyson was a greater poet than Wordsworth or Shelley or Byron or, in fact, than all of them put together.

"I may say for myself," Mr. Woodward observed firmly but modestly, "that I value poetry very much in proportion to the service which it renders to some great popular cause and to the promulgation of new ideas. Now take, for instance, such a man as Ebenezer Elliott. There is a genuine poet who devotes himself to the cause of suffering humanity, and who is inspired by the just anger against those who maintain and enforce oppressive taxes and antiquated class legislation."

"Ebenezer Elliott?" Mr. Desmond observed with some scorn in his voice. "Yes, I think I have read something about a man with that absurd sort of name. He writes verses about the corn laws, does he not, or

something of that kind? I cannot bring myself to believe in a poet whose inspiration is caught from the incidence of the tax upon barley."

Mononia here thought it well to interpose.

"I am afraid I never heard of Mr. Elliott,"— she did not venture on the first name, thinking it rather odd and unpoetic; "but, if he wrote his verses to save the poor from being taxed too heavily, I think I should be inclined to become one of his admirers."

"I think," Mr. Desmond said, as if uttering the conclusive words of judgment, "that, if Horace could have been consulted on the subject, he would have declared that gods and men and columns of whatever kind absolutely forbid that there could be any poet with the name of Ebenezer."

"But doesn't Horace say," interposed Maurice, "that a poet is born, and not made? and he certainly must be born before he gets a name. And, if he is born a poet, he is not to be prevented from filling his destiny merely because his godfathers and his godmothers inflicted on him the name of Ebenezer. I know that Mr. Conrad thinks very highly of some of Ebenezer Elliott's poems."

"Yes," said Mr. Desmond; "but, then, he also thinks highly of some of Tennyson's rubbish."

"Mr. Conrad is a man of great judgment and very advanced ideas," Mr. Woodward observed. "I like to find a man of his age who does not close his mind against everything that is new, and who is willing to admit that we can learn something which our fathers and our grandfathers did not learn. I am a believer in the new ideas and the new schools of thought."

"And the new debating society," Mr. Desmond said sarcastically.

"And the new debating society, certainly," Mr. Woodward replied with emphasis. "I tell you there are some wonderful fellows in that new debating society.

There are some young fellows there, Mr. Desmond, of whom your city ought to be proud and will be proud some day. Look at that young Phil Colston, for instance. I have heard that young man make speeches which would have done honour to the Oxford Union Debating Society,—ay, or to the House of Commons, —yes, to the House of Commons itself. They talk to me of his uncle, and how fluent he is, and how he can rattle off a speech for the defence without a moment of preparation, and sometimes, I dare say, without having read a word of his brief. But there is nothing in that. It's only what you call in Ireland the 'gift of the gab.'"

"What we call in Ireland," Mr. Desmond interrupted, "'gift of the gab' used to be good old colloquial English. But you Englishmen of the new school don't read old English prose."

"Well, anyhow," Mr. Woodward went on, "Phil Colston talks like a man who has ideas, who has thought things out, who understands that a new era is opening on the world."

Mononia felt the colour coming into her cheeks as she heard this praise from Mr. Woodward's lips, and a glow of gratitude came into her heart. But she feared, and with good reason for dread, that the spirit of argument, if nothing else, might lead her father to launch out into disparagement of Phil Colston's eloquence; and, as the time had fairly come for her to disappear from the table and leave her father and Mr. Woodward to talk politics, she rose and got out of the dining-room as quickly as she could, just exchanging one glance of significant meaning with her brother, in whose hands she left the conduct of the battle, if any had to be fought, on behalf of Phil Colston.

Maurice as yet knew nothing of the new relations which had been established between his sister and his friend; but Mononia was sure that the task of defence

was safe in his hands, for the young men were not only devoted friends, but were also the two leading rivals in the new debating society, Phil Colston representing the style of impassioned eloquence, and Maurice Desmond being the leading exponent of sharp criticism and sarcastic retort.

"I think," said Mr. Desmond, "that Philip Colston allows his new ideas, as you call them, Woodward, to run away with him a great deal too much. I don't quite know sometimes what he is driving at. The other night he talked a lot of stuff about the brotherhood of nations. What is the brotherhood of nations?"

"Yes, I remember that," said Maurice, "and I remember I chaffed him about it in my speech at the time; but that was only because I wanted to make a point against him, and he did not give me another chance. All the same, I believe he had got hold of a very good idea, and that the more we can spread it, the better."

"And so you try to turn it into ridicule," said Mr. Desmond, severely.

"Well, you see, father," Maurice pleaded for himself, "I was leading on the other side of the debate,— what it was I quite forget now,— something about monarchies and republics, I think,— so I had to do the best I could for my side of the fight; and I didn't think I could do anything better than try to raise a laugh at Phil's expense. When a fellow is put to it in that way, he will say anything rather than give in, and leave it to be supposed that he has nothing to say. But I think Phil's ideas were very good, all the same; and I should like to see a league of the peoples against the leagues of emperors and kings."

"I am with you in that," Mr. Woodward magnanimously declared. "These are the ideas of some of the best men who are coming up in the new school of Eng-

lish political life. The days of the privileged aristocracy in these countries were supposed to have gone with the Reform Bill; but a good deal has still to be done by the middle classes,—by the men who make the trade and commerce of the country before the end is accomplished."

"'There's a good time coming,'" said Mr. Desmond in a mildly scornful tone. "That's a line from one of our new poets, is it not? Is he a great poet? Much greater than Byron, I suppose."

"Well, he is a poet who deserves some praise," Woodward replied, "because he devotes himself to the spread of good popular teaching; and I admire a poet who tries to serve the popular cause."

"It would be easy work," Mr. Desmond interposed, "if one became a poet merely by uttering some popular catchwords."

"The new poets," said Woodward, "are doing a good work by trying to bring the hearts of peoples together. I wish the Irish national poets of to-day would not strive so much to make your Irish people dislike us Englishmen. Our cause is all the same. Our troubles are all the same. They all come from the privileged classes and the monopolists. The same set who misgoverned you in Ireland are misgoverning us in England. Your great O'Connell saw this. He always believed in an appeal to the good feeling of the English people. He lent his helping hand even to the cause of our Chartists. I heard him address great popular meetings in England, and he was applauded to the echo."

"Yes, and what did he get in return for it?" Maurice demanded. "What was his reward? He got imprisonment by a packed jury."

"By a packed Irish jury," Woodward replied. "And he was set free by the decision of an English High Court of Appeal."

Maurice was about to say something in reply when his father interposed.

"I thought," said Mr. Desmond, "that all your English patriots of the new school regarded the House of Lords as the one great barrier to the spread of popular liberty. What do you say to that, Woodward?"

"O'Connell's case," replied Woodward, "was one of the rare instances in which the House of Lords was compelled to give way to the force of enlightened English public opinion. I should like to tell you young Irish patriots, Maurice, that the best or the only way for them to serve their country really is to join with us, the Englishmen of the new school, and let us fight out our common battle together."

"We are quite ready to join you," Maurice replied, "if you will only hold out the hand to us; but you don't seem particularly anxious to do anything of the kind. Your great English newspapers never have a good word to say for us."

"That is only too true," Woodward said. "But, my dear boy, our great London newspapers are only monopolies in the hands of the governing classes. The English people, the true English people, have nothing to do with them, and never read them. An English workingman can't afford to pay sixpence a day for his morning's allowance of news."

"Penny newspapers, I suppose," Mr. Desmond observed, "are to be among the blessings of the good time coming."

"So they are," Mr. Woodward emphatically declared; and he went so far as actually to strike the table in affirmation of his audacious views.

Mr. Desmond had had enough of the discussion, and by rising from his chair signified his opinion that it was time for the gentlemen to return to the drawing-room. In the ordinary course of social events, this would have been to join the ladies; and, although Mr. Desmond knew that there was only one lady in the drawing-room,

and that lady his daughter, he felt that his polite duty as host called on him to conduct the social business of the evening according to the strictly conventional regulation. In his heart, however, he felt much dissatisfied with Woodward. Something was going on, it became evident to him, which he was not allowed completely to understand. The short talk he had had with Woodward before dinner had left on his mind only a kind of half-understood idea that Woodward's proposal of marriage to his daughter had been put aside or withdrawn because of some utterly ridiculous difference of opinion on political questions, and now here was Woodward talking as if the national cause of Ireland were part of the creed of every intelligent Englishman who belonged to the new school. All this was perplexing and highly unsatisfactory. In this puzzled condition the only dignified course to pursue was to await fuller explanations at the proper time, and in the mean while to keep himself to himself as much as possible. Therefore, he welcomed the opportunity of bringing the political discussion to a close by a visit to the drawing-room.

When the gentlemen entered the drawing-room, they found Mononia turning over some music-books. Mr. Woodward did not approach her, as he would have done under ordinary conditions; and Mr. Desmond settled himself into an arm-chair, and appeared disposed to lapse into silence. Maurice, who was not as yet made acquainted with the recent event in the family, began vaguely to think that something must have gone wrong; and his conjecture was that at some time before Woodward's arrival Mononia had probably been opening her mind to her father on the critical question which his sister and he had been discussing that morning. He felt bound to come to the rescue, and to make things as pleasant as possible for the one guest of the evening.

"Mononia will sing something for us," Maurice said.

"I see you have your harp up here. Do sing and play some Irish ballad for us. I don't think Mr. Woodward ever heard you sing and play, and I am sure he will be glad to hear what you can do."

"I never had the pleasure of hearing Miss Desmond sing or play," Woodward said with the gravity of one who is making an official statement. "And it will give me the greatest pleasure if she will favour us."

Mononia was always pleased to sing to any one who really cared to listen; and, although she did not feel quite certain as to Mr. Woodward's musical intuitions, she was glad to do anything which might help to make the evening pass off agreeably. She settled herself to her harp, and tried its strings with a few touches.

At that moment Mrs. Ryan came into the drawing-room, and announced that two gentlemen particularly wanted to see Mr. Desmond on business. Desmond rose, murmured a few grumblings, then begged that Woodward would excuse him for a few minutes, and left the room. Maurice always, as a matter of course, accompanied his father when any kind of official work had to be got through; and in another moment Mononia found herself once again alone with Mr. Woodward.

## CHAPTER VI

### AN IRISH MELODY

MONONIA had a rich, sweet contralto voice, which lent itself with sympathetic expression to the music and the feeling of any ballad appealing to the melancholy yearnings of the human heart. Her voice would have been lost on the ordinary music of the drawing-room and the season; but it had a magic in it which touched the fountains of emotion in natures that were sensitive, and was, therefore, especially well gifted to express in sound the innermost feelings of the Celtic ballad and to translate into words the expression of the Irish harp. She sang and played one of Thomas Moore's Irish melodies,— that one which tells of the banshee wailing over the death of him "of the hundred fights," and of that other

> "On whose burning tongue
> Truth, peace, and freedom hung."

Now Mononia had chosen this song out of a peculiar feeling of gratefulness to Mr. Woodward and out of a wish to impress upon him that, after all, the Irish banshee could appreciate the worth of great Englishmen, and could sing their death-song just as if they had been heroes of the race which it was her especial mission to weep for. The hero of the "hundred fights," whose lament is sung by Moore's banshee, was Nelson; and the orator on whose tongue truth, peace, and freedom hung was Charles James Fox. Mononia sung this song, therefore, for the benefit of Mr. Woodward; and she glanced at him more than once across her harp-strings, and she poured the soft fulness of her emotion into the lines which she especially wished to sink into his ears and into his heart. Nothing could have been more

graceful, more picturesque, and more beautiful than her face and her figure as she bent over the harp, and with her white bare arms brought forth the accompanying music from its strings.

Woodward gazed at the girl with intense admiration for her form, her face, and her voice; and, from her expressive glances, he was able to get into his mind some kind of idea that the song carried with it an especial appeal to him. He had lived too much in the south of Ireland not to know what a banshee was, or, at least, what Irish legends assumed it to be; but he did not care about banshees or ghosts or fairies or goblins of any kind, and his general conviction was that the spread of science and the development of the railway system ought to have already sounded the death-note of all these idle superstitions. And, indeed, if it had come into his mind to compose an epigram on the subject, he might have said that the railway whistle was the banshee death-song for the banshee herself. He had not the remotest notion as to the identity of the two mortals whom Moore's banshee was lamenting, and he did not even feel any curiosity on the subject. But he felt the charm of Mononia singing; and, perhaps for the first time in his life, he was really sorry when a song sung in a drawing-room had come to an end.

"You sing delightfully, Miss Desmond," was all that he could say at first. Then, with a burst of fresh inspiration, he added, "I wonder I never heard you sing before."

Mononia did not answer that she had never sung to him before because she had never imagined that he was a man who was likely to care about singing unless, perhaps, when the singing was performed by some artist of fame on the stage of some great theatre or concert hall. But she was able to read a genuine admiration in his looks; and she felt that her ballad was not wholly thrown

away on him, and was sincerely glad to have given him any pleasure.

"I do not sing often," Mononia said simply, "except for myself or my own people. My voice is not strong, and it is of no use in a large room."

"If your voice is not strong," Woodward said gallantly, "I can only say that it would be a good thing for some of us if most of the singers we hear had voices like yours, and not strong."

"But I had a particular purpose in singing that song to you," Mononia said, putting aside the implied compliment. "I sang it because it makes the Irish banshee lament for the death of the two great Englishmen. The song is by our national poet, and I wanted you to understand that Ireland is not quite so ungenerous to Englishmen as you sometimes seem to believe."

"I am delighted to hear it," Woodward replied. "There are some of us, Miss Desmond, some of us Englishmen, who must always wish well to Ireland, and be happy when they can find friends in Ireland."

"But you have not asked me who are the two great Englishmen over whom the Irish banshee sang her lament."

Woodward really felt no great curiosity on the subject, and was thinking not in the least about the song, but only about the singer. He had, however, to put on an appearance of some interest, and so he asked the question; and, when Mononia gave him the answer, it came back to his mind that she and he had been speaking of Charles James Fox not many hours before, and then he began to understand why she had sung the song to him. He had some genuine sympathy and much intelligence, although he was an intensely practical man; and he understood that the song was meant to pour balm upon the wound which Mononia had been compelled to inflict upon him a short time before. There

was something faintly approaching to the poetic in the thought which inspired him to say,—

"Your banshee, Miss Desmond, has sung one death-song which your national poet was not thinking of when he was composing his verses. Do you know what that is?"

Mononia thought she knew what he meant to say, but did not know for the moment how fittingly to express herself. He did not give her time to answer, however, but quietly went on.

"It sings the death-song of one Englishman's hope. Is not that so, Miss Desmond?"

"I cannot pretend to misunderstand your meaning," she said, looking away from him at first; and then, turning upon him with kindly eyes, she added,—

"I am afraid it must be so; but you understand me, Mr. Woodward, and you forgive me, and we are friends?"

"Is it all over," he asked, "and may I not press this on you once again?"

"No, no, never!" she said in a low, soft tone, but very firmly. "Never again, Mr. Woodward, it would be of no use. Believe me, I thank you from my very heart for the good opinion you have formed of me; and I shall always count you among my best friends."

"And you will remember your promise," he said,—"the promise that you will prove my friendship if ever the chance should come to make it of any use to you or yours?"

"I shall never forget," she replied, "that I have a friend in you."

Just at this moment Mr. Desmond and Maurice returned to the room.

"I am sorry to have been so long away," said Mr. Desmond; "but some troublesome people have been worrying me about the terms of one of our city contracts, and I find I have not got the papers with me.

Maurice says he is sure he saw the document in one of my desks at the office, and I think he will have to take my keys and get them at once."

Thereupon the little party broke up. Woodward said that he was going to see a man at the club, and that he would walk into town with Maurice; and so Mononia and her father were left alone.

Mononia brought about the crisis at once.

"I have something to say to you, dear father," she said, "something very serious."

"About Mr. Woodward, I suppose," her father said, contracting his eyebrows with the manner of a dignified judge who composes himself becomingly to listen for an appeal for mercy, which he knows already that he cannot possibly grant.

"No, not about Mr. Woodward," Mononia said quietly. "What I want to say has nothing to do with Mr. Woodward. I want to speak about you and about Maurice and about me, and what we are to do in the future."

Then she drew her chair close to him, put one arm on the elbow of his chair and the other on the back of it over his head, and began to pour out her heart to him. She told him that the condition of their domestic affairs was becoming intolerable, that the debts were increasing every day, that the creditors were becoming more and more importunate, that the amount of his income did not meet half the expense of the kind of life they were leading, and that a crisis could not longer be delayed. Mr. Desmond listened at first with a half-amused air, such as might have suited an indulgent father whose daughter is complaining to him that her dress allowance is not nearly enough to enable her to compete on equal terms with the young ladies of her acquaintance. But as the girl went on, and showed herself more and more deeply in earnest, and as her eyes sometimes flashed with

impassioned appeal and were sometimes dimmed by tears that would start, he began to find his position grow decidedly disagreeable. Mr. Desmond has already been described as a sensualist of the more harmless order; and, indeed, his whole principle of life, if he can be said to have set up anything like a principle for the guidance of his life, was that happiness consisted in the culture of all that was agreeable and the avoidance of all that was disagreeable to the sensuous part of man's nature. His first feeling, therefore, when Mononia showed him that she was really serious, was a sense of resentment against the unreasonableness of the girl who would disturb what might have been a quiet hour by a useless discourse about debts and bills and tradesmen and the necessity of domestic economy. What is the use of all this talk? he mentally asked of himself, even as he looked into his daughter's eyes. What is the good of disturbing me just now with all this disagreeable disquisition? There is nothing to be done. I can't make the money go any farther than it goes, and she must know that quite as well as I do; and why can't she let me alone? He listened to her, however, with perfect patience until she seemed to have said all she had to say and to be waiting for some answer from him.

"I really don't quite know what you propose to do, Mononia," he said. "I am sure, I very much wish that I could keep up this place as it ought to be kept up," — it gave him a certain feeling of pleasure, amid all his vexation, to speak of keeping up the place, as if it were an ancestral castle,— "but, really, I don't see that I can do any more than I am doing. I dare say we are rather expensive in our ways, but then I have always been accustomed to that sort of thing. I was brought up to it, in fact; and I'm afraid I can't begin to change my nature and to turn myself into a calculator and an economist at my time of life."

"But, dear father, it is for your sake, above all things, and to save you from trouble and pain and humiliation, that I want us all to unite heart and soul and make some effort before it is too late."

"What do you propose to do, my wise and energetic child? I am greatly touched by your kindly consideration for your aged parent," — this was Mr. Desmond's touch of sarcasm,— "but please tell me what you propose to do."

"I propose, dear father, that we shall sell or let Desmond Lodge; and, if we sell it, that we shall sell most of the furniture with it, go into some cheap cottage, and live quietly,— live to ourselves for the most part,— and that Maurice should turn to work of some kind. I am sure he could succeed in literature or in writing for newspapers. He thinks himself that he could make a career in London, and I think so, too; and I am sure I could get some pupils, and teach drawing and give lessons in French and Italian and the harp and the piano, perhaps, and write something, too, for which I might get paid. And so we could make a living, and keep altogether out of debt, and make your life much happier, dear father, than it can possibly be if things go on as they are going on now. What happiness is there in going out to dinners and parties, and having people here to dine with us who care nothing about us, knowing all the time that we are sinking deeper and deeper into debt, and that utter shipwreck must come before long?"

"You propose a life of honest poverty in three back garret rooms," Mr. Desmond said with a pitying smile.

"We could get a small and very pretty cottage in a cheaper place," Mononia replied, "and live there quietly, and be very happy."

"And you would light the fires and scrub the floors," Mr. Desmond said, still in his sarcastic way, "and cook

the dinner while you were teaching French and Latin and the use of the globes and Shakespeare, and the musical glasses, the elements of drawing and the harp, the piano, and writing articles for the *Edinburgh Review.* Is that a fair statement of your plan, Mononia?"

"You are laughing at me," she said quietly; "but I have been talking very seriously. Of course, I know I could not do all the household work myself, but it is no part of my plan to turn away dear old Mrs. Ryan and her husband. They have always been with us, and will always be with us, I hope; and they would keep the little cottage in perfect order and do everything for us much better than they can at present, when they have far more work than they can properly do. Murtagh would keep the boat in order for us; for, dear father, I mean to have our boat still, and find a cottage near the river, and, indeed, indeed, I think we could be very happy if you will only listen to my ideas, and let Maurice and me help you to become independent and free once more."

"Then Maurice is in this great scheme, too?"

"Maurice is with me in everything I try to do. We have been comrades ever since we were children; and I could not come to any resolve,—I mean," she said hastily correcting herself, "any resolve which concerns us all alike without Maurice's agreement and support."

"But I thought part of the plan was that Maurice was to escape out of all the trouble by going off to London to make a great career for himself there, and setting up as a rival, perhaps, to Charles Dickens or Alfred Tennyson."

"Dear father, that was one of our ideas for the future,—for the vague future, I am afraid. Maurice could not possibly go to London just now to seek his fortune, for the good reason that we have none of us any money to enable him to go there and to set up for himself.

For the present he must stay here, and help you all he can; and he may be of much help while we are making some arrangements to get rid of all those debts, and to begin a new and different sort of life."

"Mononia, you really talk as if I were not a person to be consulted in this matter at all,—as if my life were to be laid out for me by my son and daughter without anybody taking the trouble even to ask me for my opinion on the subject. I really must have time to think over all this. My decision cannot be given at a moment's notice."

"But things will not wait," Mononia pleaded. "We know quite well — only too well, Maurice and I — what trouble it must cause you to make all this change; and our great object is to save you all the trouble we can and to do everything for you,— not to put you to the pain of making any decision. Oh, do trust to us! Do put your trust in us! We will make it all as smooth as we can. Only we cannot bear the thought of what may happen to you if these debts go on increasing, and there is no hope of meeting them."

"Do you think I have no friends?" he asked in reproachful tone.

"I am afraid we have worn out our friends, or most of them," Mononia answered sadly. "And, even if we had not, we sicken at the prospect of living on the bounty of our friends,— living like some of the privileged beggars who come round the house on Sunday. Oh, my dear father, we cannot endure any longer to see you put in so humiliating a position. Let us end it once for all. It is only a firm resolve and a brave struggle, and then we can all be happy again."

Mr. Desmond was for the moment really touched. Moreover, he preferred anything to the trouble of arguing the matter out too long. It suddenly came into his mind, too, that there was something attractive and

picturesque in the idea of the humble cottage by the riverside, and the descendant of the great family sheltered there by his devoted son and daughter. He began to think there was a good deal to be said for Mononia's plan of action. Then another idea came into his mind: What if all this were but a dramatic or melodramatic prelude to the triumphant announcement that Mononia was about to become Mr. Woodward's wife, and thus to save the whole situation? This seemed to him the most likely explanation of the sudden pressure brought to bear upon him. It had been his intention to obtain from Mononia a full account of what had happened during her interview with Woodward; but now it occurred to him that the most graceful thing on his part would be to say nothing about Woodward, and let the drama proclaim its happy conclusion at the right time. He had not failed to notice, when he returned to the drawing-room with Maurice, that Woodward was close beside Mononia and her harp; and it did not seem that their attitude towards each other spoke of anything like the rejection of a lover's proposal. So, with a feeling of satisfaction at his own acuteness, he made up his mind to put himself in Mononia's hands, and let her announce the happy ending in her own good time.

"Mononia," he said sweetly, "you have ever been a devoted daughter to me; and in many ways you have much more good sense than your old father. I put myself wholly in your hands, dear child. Do as you will. I feel well convinced that, whatever you decide to do, will be the best for all of us."

Then Mononia in her delight threw her arms round him and kissed him on both cheeks; and Mr. Desmond felt somehow as if he ought to be the subject of a poem or the central figure in a picture illustrating paternal tenderness and filial devotion.

"Now, dear girl," he said, "let us speak no more for

the present of this crisis which we have to go through. It is enough that I put my full trust in you, and that you are free to take whatever course you think is for the best. You must go to bed now and have a good sleep, or you will wither your roses and will wear but a melancholy face at Captain Carey's to-morrow night and only set people talking. For we must go to Carey's, of course, Mononia,—we can't get out of that; and not to go would only sound an alarm for nothing, and you don't want to do that, do you?"

"Dear father, it would be hard indeed of me if I were to object to do anything which gave you the slightest pleasure, when you are doing so much to meet my wishes. Besides, I think you are right. I think we had better go through to-morrow evening in the old way, and not set people talking before we are ready to act." It gave her a feeling of genuine pleasure to be able to tell her father that she thought he was in the right, although it were only about Captain Carey's party. She thought that her father had yielded bravely and nobly, and she felt intensely grateful to him. He believed that he had divined the secret of a delightful little plot about which he must pretend to know nothing until the happy moment should have arrived for its full revelation. Thus Mononia and her father parted for the night on terms of complete harmony and of absolute misunderstanding.

## CHAPTER VII

### OUR SET

THIS story has to do, for the greater part, with a set of people, mostly young, who lived in that southern seaport town the spires of whose churches were visible from the upper windows of Desmond Lodge. It might probably be described as a set of peculiar people, although by no means in the sense in which the two words have come to hold in more modern social discourse. Most of the stories which describe the life of Ireland, especially the life of a few years back, seem to be constructed on the assumption that Ireland was peopled exclusively by landlords and peasants.

The set with which this story has mainly to deal was made up almost altogether of middle-class personages belonging generally to the professional orders, abiding in cities and towns, and neither owning ancestral acres nor digging in the fields with spades. Among them, indeed, were some who, like the elder Desmond, maintained with pride the theory that they had an ancestry, and that only the invasions of the tyrant Saxons had dispossessed them of the castles and the estates which ought to be theirs, and put them to the necessity of working for a living.

Maurice Desmond was one of the rising lights of a social circle which included a number of clever, well-read, and ambitious young fellows, the sons of local barristers, solicitors, and physicians, all fairly well to do, and each of them filled with a fond belief that he was destined, somehow or other, to make a distinct name for himself. An intense love for reading and for what would now be called culture was common to almost all the young fellows who belonged to this circle. There

was little scholarship of the more exact kind among them; but there was a wide and varied reading of books, and the reading was not by any means confined to books in the English language. A typical youth of that set might safely be counted upon to have what may be called a good literary although not perhaps scholarly knowledge of Greek and Latin; that is, he could read the great Greek and Latin authors with ease and with thorough enjoyment. He could read French fluently, could follow out his Dante and his Tasso without frequent reference to a dictionary, was probably influenced by the rising wave of sympathy with the literature of Germany, and had dreamed with Faust in the vaulted chamber.

The movement for the revival of Celtic literature and the Celtic languages had not taken definite shape at that time; but the Irish national literature, and especially the ballad literature of the day, had filled the minds and hearts of true young nationalists with a faith in the poetic genius of the olden Irish minstrelsy. The poems of Thomas Davis, Clarence Mangan, of Charles Gavan Duffy, and other writers of rising influence, had taught young men to believe that there was something to be done by that generation towards the creation, or rather the revival, of a genuine Irish literature which should take its inspiration from the history, the traditions, the mountains, and the rivers of Ireland, and from the very atmosphere of the island. There was a strange vague sense of a new birth in literature and in political feeling among the youth in the south, and, indeed, all parts of Ireland; for much of the inspiration came from the northern province which had long been regarded as the home of the governing and anti-national system in Ireland.

The political movement led by Daniel O'Connell had thoroughly spent its force; and the years of famine

which had gone over the land seemed as if they had come to bury the dead past. The Young Ireland movement had come up, but was as yet rather a nationalist and literary movement than a definite political organization. The heart of Irish youth seemed to have been touched, in some mystical way, by a new poetic spirit. Most of the young men who formed the set to which Maurice Desmond belonged were ardent nationalists; although with many of them the national impulse had not yet taken the form of any definite political dogma. The city in which Maurice Desmond lived, being a busy seaport carrying on an active trade with England, with the European continent, and with the United States, had, naturally, a good many English and foreign settlers in it; and the sons of some of these settlers took part in the literary and artistic movements in which the town folk delighted, and, therefore, all manner of opinions on political, as well as other subjects, found expression in the local debating societies.

There were two of these debating societies, which took precedence of all others, and competed between themselves for popular confidence and admiration. One was a long-established, grave, and decorous institution, which was conducted mainly by the elders of the city, although until very lately many of the youngsters, too, had borne a part in its debates. But there was a revolutionary spirit abroad almost everywhere at that time, as there had been just a half-century before; and the elders devoted themselves mainly to the repression, or, at least, the discouragement of that revolutionary spirit, while the youngsters were doing their best to encourage it and to broaden its influence. The result was what anybody might reasonably have anticipated. The youngsters started a new and rival association, and the public opinion of the city was agitated and divided by unceasing comparison between the claims and the merits

of the new institution and the old. Nor was it always easy to say where the supporters of either side might be confidently looked for. Suppose that one were a respectable elder of that day, a professional man of responsible position, and were a member of the older organization. He might naturally be expected to make himself its champion, and to proclaim the superiority of its title to public admiration. But, then, suppose this respectable elder had a son, who was one of the brilliant lights of the younger association, and to whose eloquence the applause of delighted crowds did homage every evening of debate. Was it not more than possible that fatherly pride might triumph over tradition and conventionality, and admit that these young fellows were proving themselves the masters of the field. On the other hand, let us take the case of some younger member of the old institution, who always found himself listened to with becoming patience, and even with polite expressions of encouragement, whenever he rose to address the audience within the hall, but who, in the younger assembly, found his efforts at argument made the subject of satire and chaff, and occasionally felt himself swept out of consideration by the torrent of some opponent's eloquence. Is it not possible that he might be induced to believe that he had made a fatal mistake when he left the assembly of the wise and the elderly for the representative chamber of mere school-boy declamation?

At all events, it was quite certain that the rival merits of the two societies formed an unending subject of discussion in the social circles of the city. Speaking generally and without any pretence at arithmetical accuracy, one might say that the young unmarried ladies were more drawn to the hall of youthful declamation, and that the wives whose boys had not yet emerged from school preferred to listen to the eloquence of their hus-

bands in the semicircular hall where the elders of the city laid down the law. The general public, it should be said, attended the weekly meetings of both societies with something like impartiality; but it occasionally happened that there were vacant seats here and there on the benches of the older institution, while a debate in the hall of its younger rival was sure to find every seat occupied, and would have found occupants for ever so many more if only the additional seats had been there to occupy. Mr. Desmond was one of the vice-presidents of the elder institution. Mr. Woodward was vice-president of both. Mr. Conrad, the schoolmaster, was a member of both; but he attended more regularly the meetings of the younger body,—a preference easily to be accounted for from the fact that so many of his former or present pupils were among its debaters.

Phil Colston and Maurice Desmond have already been described as the two great rival debaters of the younger society; and the fact that they were friends did not make them any the less keen or scathing as rivals in debate, while the fact that they were rivals in debate did not make them any the less close and attached in friendship. Phil's tastes and temperament impelled him to impassioned eloquence. Maurice usually played the part of the keen and rasping critic. One of the rising stars of the society was a young Frenchman named Achille Dubois, the son of one of the foreigners who had settled in the town and made for themselves a home there. Achille was about twenty years of age, and was a brilliant talker. His parents came from the south of France, where he himself had been born; and he brought all the enthusiasm of the southern nature into his competition as a debater. He had a great taste for music and a fine tenor voice, and he used to delight his companions by his singing of some of Béranger's ballads. Béranger brought a new inspiration to the impulses of

the young fellows in the southern city, who, like Phil Colston and Maurice Desmond, believed in their patriotic mission to champion the cause of the oppressed. Béranger's verses seemed to be aflame with that love of freedom and hatred of despotism which had done such marvellous work in France before, and seemed just then to be requickening in France once again. Willie Woodward, although he was but fifteen years old, had spoken several times with readiness and good effect in the debating society; and he was very popular among its audiences. Achille Dubois might be said to have enrolled himself under the banner of Phil Colston, while Willie Woodward appeared to have chosen Maurice Desmond as his leader.

These four were much together on the river and on the sea, as well as in the hall of the debating society. They often amused themselves by commenting on and chaffing the national peculiarities of each other. The two young Irishmen and the young Frenchman often pretended to make common cause against the English boy, and to take him as the chosen representative of hereditary monarchy and aggressive despotism. Willie was delighted with the idea, and was never more happy than when exchanging chaff with his three elder companions. He mimicked their pronunciations and accent, and used to give extemporaneous renderings of some of Phil's fine sentences into the dialect of the stage Irishman, which he gravely assured them was exactly as it sounded to his English ears. Then, as Achille was very proud of his English, Willie would give what he declared to be a faithful reproduction of the young Frenchman's attempt at the tongue of the Briton, which convulsed even the young Frenchman himself with uncontrollable laughter. Then Achille would retort by declaiming Béranger's song about the boxers, in which the French poet expresses his wonder at the

discovery that the British national game of boxing actually consists of one man standing up to one man, whereas the way of Britain in her continental wars was never to attack the enemy single-handed, but always to assail him when she had three or four other great powers at her back.

All this, of course, was confined to the private circles in which the young fellows habitually met, and never was allowed to make its way into the thrilling discussions of the debating society, where grave questions concerning man's progress and the forms of human government, which had perplexed the world since days long before the Trojan War, were brought up for settlement and satisfactorily disposed of after a single night's debate. In neither of the debating societies were any political questions allowed to come up for discussion; and the spirit of the rule prohibiting their introduction was observed faithfully enough in the older society, but was habitually disregarded by the members of the younger institution. Nothing could be more easy, for instance, than to start some debate having to do with the days of Pericles at Athens or Julius Cæsar in Rome, and to make the orator's favourite hero represent the modern cause which the orator espoused, and his tyrant or his traitor stand as a type of the tyrant Saxon or the Irish renegade. Then, again, if the subject of debate had anything to do with any province misgoverned by the Romans, and in which crops were wasted and people were left to perish of hunger, with what a tremendous force of denunciation some patriotic speaker could contrive to make his audience understand, without infringing any rule of the society, that the misgovernment of Ireland in the days of the recent famine was held up to public reprobation! Or the conduct of the Romans in dealing with Germanicus,— could any one who had heard the debate fail to understand that Achille Dubois

was reilluminating some of Béranger's most glowing lyrical pictures of the fate of Napoleon at the hands of his British conquerors?

Let it be said that the young men and boys in the set which is under description here took but little account of Béranger except as the minstrel of many a lost political cause. They cared nothing for the cheery profanity, for the light, loose loves which he delighted to celebrate, for his aggressive infidelity, or for his persistent proclamation of the doctrine that the only sensible thing to be done in life is to eat, drink, and make love, for to-morrow we are likely to be put in prison or to die. They delighted in Béranger only because he sang of liberty and human brotherhood, whether these show themselves in the Athens of the great old days or in the fall of the Bastile or in the Latin Quarter of the existing Paris, and because he bore specially hard upon England and English sovereigns and English governments, and they felt sure that, if he had known anything about Ireland, he would have stood up for her national cause. There was a general inclination among them to welcome the literature of France, and *Monte Cristo* and *The Three Musketeers* ranked among their most chosen heroes. Some of the young men affected to dress themselves for evening costume in the white waistcoat and the thin gold chain which constituted a regular part of the uniform of Monte Cristo in the days of his wealth; and a few even went so far in imitation of their model that they declined to dance at an evening party, for the reason understood, but not openly expressed, that Monte Cristo did not condescend to any such frivolous amusement.

It is only fair to say, however, that their objection to the domination of the English government did not affect in the slightest degree their sentiments towards English literature. Nowhere all over the world had Charles

Dickens a set of more enthusiastic admirers. The novels of Dickens used to make their appearance — it need hardly be said — in monthly numbers, costing a shilling each. Some of the young fellows who belonged to the debating society had formed themselves into little bands of twelve, each one of the twelve subscribing a penny a month for the purchase of each number as it came out. Then they drew lots for each subscriber's turn at reading, and the arrangement was that the one of the twelve who only got the month's number after the other eleven had done with it was to have the number all to himself as a compensation for the long delay. In this way many a young fellow who might have found it hard to spare a shilling a month out of his scant pocket money was enabled to read the numbers of Dickens's stories as they made their appearance, and some of them became the happy possessors of the whole serial. One young fellow was especially proud of having secured a prize of priceless value because he had had the happy audacity to write to Dickens begging for his autograph, and the great novelist had sent him a friendly line and a characteristic signature in prompt reply to his request. In those simple and far-off days the quest for autographs of eminent persons had not become a common social practice; and the youth who had written from an Irish seaport town to the author of *Pickwick* and had obtained an autograph letter in reply to his prayer, was almost as much wondered at for his audacity as he was envied for his good fortune.

The novels of Walter Scott were the delight of youths and maidens alike among the frequenters of both debating societies and all their friends; while some of the elders had occasion to find serious fault with the young fellows who took to the reading of *Eugene Aram* and *Paul Clifford*, and were wont to deliver family lectures as to the moral dangers which might come from a heed-

less admiration for such heroes. Perhaps it is almost needless to say that in a seaport town the young men were generally enthusiastic about Captain Marryat's novels; but the girls, although brought up by the sea-shore and familiar with ships and boats, could not be got to take an interest in *Peter Simple* or *Jacob Faithful*, and turned with infinitely greater zest to the pages of Scott or Dickens or even of Bulwer Lytton. At that time the problem novel, or even the novel with a purpose, had not yet come up; and no one would have known what was meant if he or she were to be told that some favourite romance was an old-fashioned novel. In more recent days a scornful critic has been known to observe, when striving to justify his disparagement of some of Scott's novels, that he had ceased to believe of men in armour. The girls and boys of the set with whom we are now dealing fully believed in men in armour, and found *The Talisman* just as true a story as *Nicholas Nickleby*. Therefore, we are fairly entitled to claim for them the credit that they did not lock up their literary tastes in water-tight compartments; and, if they held to the old school of the author of *Waverley* they were ready to learn from the new school which had come up with Charles Dickens, and was about to come up with the author of *Vanity Fair*.

## CHAPTER VIII

### CAPTAIN CAREY'S DINNER

CAPTAIN DANIEL CAREY was giving a dinner party, a dance, and a supper, to which his friends were liberally invited by three different sets of invitations. A limited number of the graver elders were bidden to the dinner only. A select few of them who did not go in for being quite as grave as the rest were also invited to take share in the subsequent festivities. The young men and young women who brightened the social circle to which Captain Carey belonged had invitations for the ball and the supper; while a certain number of the captain's less select acquaintances were made welcome to the supper only, the supper being announced to begin at a rather advanced hour of the night, and being understood to go on as long as anybody cared to stay and take a chance of getting something to eat or to drink.

Captain Carey's house stood on the outskirts of the town at its landward and more genteel side. It had in former days been a straggling collection of farm buildings standing quite away from the city, which had gradually encroached upon it and finally annexed it. Many modern additions had been made to its buildings; and it possessed a large enclosure on the ground floor, once used as a storeroom or a barn and then having a stone floor, which had in more recent days been covered over with pine planks and was now used on joyous occasions as a ball-room. This was, of course, an immense advantage to the social purposes of the hospitable owner; and the place possessed another especial recommendation in the flat roof of one of its buildings, which Captain Carey had covered with a garden and converted into a delightful place of open-air

entertainment in the fine weather. Nothing could be more refreshing for the dancers than to wander from the ball-room on to the garden roof, and there occasionally contemplate the moon, or even, when the gayety was very much prolonged, catch the first rays of the rising sun and indulge in the mood of flirtation appropriate to either opportunity.

None of his friends in the city quite knew how Daniel Carey had acquired the title of Captain. It was generally understood that his father had served in some army abroad and had held some position in a yeomanry regiment during Daniel Carey's childhood, and the assumption was that by some mysterious process of succession the title of Captain had descended to the son. Nobody, however, inquired much into this question of military rank; and everybody liked Dan Carey, who made himself popular in many ways, and even the local jealousies forebore to express any grudge about according to him his full military distinction. He had, however, another title commonly accorded to him as well as that of captain, and was very often spoken of by his friends and acquaintances as "Dan Carey, the poet." Daniel was now over sixty years of age, but he had not yet published any volumes, or even one volume, of poetry. His claim to the honoured title of poet consisted partly in the fact that a few verses of his composition appeared occasionally in the local newspapers, and were received by the uncritical with good-humoured approbation. But his more telling claim to the title was a certain gift of improvisation, which enabled him at a moment's notice to rattle off a number of humorous lines, or at least lines professing to be humorous, about the assembled company or about some particular event which had caused them to assemble. At a wedding breakfast, for instance, Dan Carey was sure to be called upon to propose the health of the bridesmaids; and this he was expected to

accomplish and always did accomplish in a string of extemporaneous verses describing in glowing terms the graces and charms of each young lady to whom the toast applied. In fact, where any other man would have made a speech,—and in the social circle to which he belonged speeches were at that time a recognised part of almost every entertainment,—the poet let off his metrical shower of rockets, and never failed to be rewarded by the general applause of his audience. He seemed, in fact, to play a part something like that of one of the bards who gladdened the festive celebrations of old-time kings and princes, or that which a Neapolitan *improvisatore* might have accomplished in more recent days.

The captain and poet did not live on any military pension or on any princely rewards accorded to him for his exploits in verse. It was well known that he was a member of a prosperous trading firm in the seaport town, and it was quite understood that his means were ample even for the liberal hospitality which he offered to his neighbours. The captain and poet had, as one of his friends expressed it, a taste for getting married; and the lady who now presided over his dinner table was his third wife. She was at least thirty years younger than her husband; but she seemed to take her position very kindly, and was decidedly popular among the women of her acquaintance, married and single, old and young. Each of Captain Carey's former wives had had a noble tomb erected to her memory in the principal burial-ground of the city, and the tombstone of each recorded in imperishable letters the undying grief of the inconsolable husband. Every one said that Dan Carey always did these things very handsomely; and it seemed quite likely that, if the fates should once again darkly interpose and remove the present wife to another and a better world, the captain and poet would find no insurmountable difficulty in obtaining a successor to her place.

The dinner party at Captain Carey's began at six o'clock, an hour which was then considered to be one of quite fashionable lateness. The guests assembled in an old-fashioned drawing-room, liberally adorned with pictures, small busts in marble, and statuettes in Parian. This was long before the days of Japanese fans or of china plates fastened to the walls, and the art of the photographer had not got beyond the production of the unsatisfactory and somewhat tantalising daguerreotype which had to be held in a particular light if the gazer were anxious to make out the features so shadowed forth. One group of statuettes represented Canova's Three Graces, and on the chimney-piece was a miniature copy of Dannecker's Ariadne on her panther. It is not necessary to give any further description of the style of ornament which distinguished that drawing-room.

The dining-room was a large, oblong, old-fashioned apartment, which served for a library as well as for a banquet hall, and was ornamented with plaster busts of Sir Walter Scott, Lord Byron, and Thomas Moore, and a small plaster statue of Napoleon. The table was laid for twelve guests; and the guests saw their dinner, in the most literal sense, when they sat down to table. The board was spread with heavy joints of roasted meats and boiled ham and various dishes of poultry. Each of the guests — the men guests that is to say — was expected to carve from the dish set before him. Beside each plate were arranged, on such a great occasion as the present, five glasses,— one for sherry, one for claret, one for port, one for champagne, this latter a tall glass tapering outwards from a slender stem to a wide brim, and a green glass for hock. The ceremonial of drinking wine at freely chosen intervals still flourished in those days. The host led off the performance by inviting the eldest lady of the party to drink wine with

him; and this social duty was solemnly accomplished by the host bowing to the lady as he touched the glass with his lips, and then slightly raising it in the air, the lady imitating his example after her own graceful fashion. Then the other gentlemen present were free to invite any of the company at convenient intervals to drink wine with them.

Thackeray good-humouredly defended this now forgotten ceremonial on the ground that it enabled the dullest or the shyest man in the company to say something which Cicero or Chesterfield could not have said any better. Certainly, as the custom manifested itself at more formal and conventional dinner tables, the mere utterance of the words, "Mrs. Brown, will you do me the honour of drinking wine with me?" gave to the most eloquent of men no particular advantage over the man least skilled in the art of expression. But at such dinner tables as Captain Carey's, and especially in the south of Ireland, the custom did not prevent a man, endowed with a sense of his own wit and his own faculty of expression, from making manifest his superiority. For example the humourist might put it in this way: "Mrs. Brown, I have not heard that you have become a disciple of Father Mathew. May I therefore invite you to join me in a glass of this generous champagne?" Or it might be, "Mrs. Brown, I hope there is no ill-feeling existing between you and me." And then, when the lady by a graceful bow and a genial gesture, disclaimed all hostile sentiment, he could add, "Then I invite you to testify to our friendship by pledging me in this super-excellent claret." A well-qualified diner-out could always contrive, moreover, to gratify his host by paying an especial tribute to that particular wine on the table which he believed to be his host's especial pride, and could thus show at once that he appreciated good wine and was ready to proclaim its excellence to the less skilled among the company.

There was a great deal of bright talk and what would now be called chaff at this particular dinner party, and Captain Carey threw off several extemporaneous verses, and many compliments were paid to the ladies; and, as the company was not very large,— the talk was general rather than that of particular twos and twos,— nobody ran any risk of being bored. The time came in due course for the ladies to retire; and then set in what was probably considered in those days, at all events in that part of Ireland, the serious business of the dinner party.

The men drew their chairs together; and decanters of whiskey and tall jugs of hot water were set on the table, lemons and sugar were brought in, and the guests mixed for themselves glasses, or, as they were then called, tumblers of whiskey punch. And then — what happened then? Did the guests begin to argue about politics or to interchange anecdotes which might have been hardly suitable if the ladies had not left the room? Nothing of the kind. The host opened the proceedings by rising and proposing a toast, perhaps the health of Her Majesty, the Queen, if the company was known to be thoroughly loyal, or perhaps the health of some public man whose name was held in honour by all who sat around the table. Captain Carey preferred to accomplish this social duty in extemporaneous verse; but the ordinary host on such occasions delivered an eloquent speech which might have suited a public banquet, say a lord mayor's dinner, at our own time. No matter how small the dinner party, this ceremonial was always welcome. Then, when the company had duly honoured the toast, it was free to any of the guests to ask permission to propose a toast on his own account; and the permission was always duly granted. By this time the young men and boys of the house, if there were any such belonging to the family, were free to present themselves in the dining-room; and so, too, were

any young men, who, having been invited to the dance, had arrived before the time arranged for the opening quadrille. If it should so happen that the guests were all too shy to volunteer speeches, the host was sure to call on one of them by name, and invite him to delight the company by his eloquence and by offering to them some toast which it would be their duty to honour.

On this particular occasion, Captain Carey, seeing that no one spontaneously rose to carry on what would be called in the House of Commons "the business of the evening," invited his dear and lifelong friend, Mr. Desmond of Desmond Lodge, whose high literary gifts were so well known to all his fellow-citizens, to oblige the company with a toast. Thereupon the elder Desmond arose, and, with some words of apology for his unpreparedness and his lack of oratorical power, proceeded to deliver a flowing address, rich with classical allusions and brought home to the common understanding by a quotation from Byron and one from Thomas Moore, and concluded by inviting the company to drink to the prosperity of the seaport town to which they all belonged, its shipping, its trade, and its industry.

It is not necessary to go through the list of toasts proposed and honoured on this occasion. The spirit of the ceremonial seemed to be that each member of the company seated around the table should be afforded an opportunity of expressing his sentiments on some subject or another. When this requirement had been nearly fulfilled, the host, who had taken care that there should be thus far one exception to its fulfilment, arose and invited the youngest of those at the table to propose a toast to the ladies. Then the youngest member, who must have known pretty well that he was purposely left out of the speech-making up to that time, arose and endeavoured to express his sentiments on so enthralling and at the same time so embarrassing a subject; and he

resumed his seat amid loud applause and with the impression in his mind, according to his own peculiar temperament, that he had decidedly distinguished himself or that he had made a confounded fool of himself.

Now, according to what might be considered the natural order of things, this toast was the conclusion of the business of speech-making for that evening. Everybody, however, knew quite well that there was some ceremony of the same order still to be got through; and nobody felt in the least surprised when Captain Carey arose, and announced that it had now become his duty as host to go to the drawing-room and inform the ladies that a toast in their honour had been proposed in eloquent language by their devoted friend and admirer who had just spoken, and had been received with natural enthusiasm by the assembled company. Thereupon the host arose from his chair, and, bowing, left the room. Those who remained behind could have had no possible doubt in their minds as to what was to follow. The elder Maurice Desmond arose once again, and informed the company that in the absence of their host he was about to take the liberty of proposing a toast on his own account. The other guests put on a becoming appearance of surprise, but at the same time gave to the genial orator a cordial welcome. Thereupon Mr. Desmond proposed in terms of appropriate magniloquence the health of the host and hostess, on whose merits and charms, on whose hospitality and domestic virtues, he dwelt in several glowing sentences.

The toast, it is needless to say, was received with rounds of applause; and then Mr. Desmond, leaving his seat, went round to the empty chair which had been occupied by the host, and, finding the host's half-emptied glass standing in its rightful place on the table, he solemnly laid two silver spoons crosswise over its brim. It will probably be necessary to explain to readers even

in the south of Ireland at this time of day, and certainly to all English and foreign readers, if such there should be found for these pages, what the meaning was of this symbolic ceremonial. Its object was to convey to the eyes and mind of the host on his return that the health of himself and his wife had been duly toasted during his absence. If Captain Carey had been a bachelor or a widower, he would have found only one spoon laid across his glass, and would have accepted the honour accordingly. The spoon arrangement had hardly been got through when Captain Carey returned to the dining-room, and passed round to occupy his vacant chair. As he was about to seat himself, his eyes fell upon the symbolic spoons; and a well-assumed expression, first of surprise and then of delight, passed over his jovial face. In a moment he was on his feet again, and began to tell the guests that he felt sure he could not have misinterpreted the meaning of the testimony which had just come under his eyes, and he assumed he might take it for granted that his friends, during his short absence, had done Mrs. Carey and himself the honour of drinking their health. Thereupon he returned thanks in what the newspapers of the time would probably have called a neat and appropriate speech, assuring his friends that Mrs. Carey would feel no less highly honoured than he did when he made known to her the distinction which had been conferred upon them both; and then with one or two lines of extemporised rhyme he concluded his address, and invited the company to repair with him to the drawing-room.

The diner-out of our own days may no doubt regard with utter surprise and ineffable scorn the peculiar social ceremonial which has just been described. It was very absurd, indeed; but, if we once begin philosophising over the absurdity of social ceremonials, where are we to stop, and what year, however recent, is to be safe from our criticism? And what region of the civilised world is not

to be visited by our elaborate satire? No doubt the whole business of dinner-table speech-making becomes more ridiculous according as the field of its display is diminished in area, just as the court ceremonials which we all admire and venerate in some great European capital would appear utterly ludicrous if we saw them enacted in the mud city of some West African monarch. There are ceremonies mixed up with the speech-making at a Guildhall banquet or a dinner at some of the Inns of Court which even the philosophic mind observes without any feeling of contempt, but which would appear too absurd for tolerance itself if performed in a small dining-room for the benefit of half a dozen guests. We need not, however, enlarge upon this old moral,— the ceremonials of the Liliputians never could be fairly criticised by human observers of the ordinary size.

When the guests had all assembled in the drawing-room, the musical part of the entertainment set in. It was a matter of course that, if a lady was invited to favour the company with a song, some gentleman should give her his arm to escort her to the piano, even though she were seated at the time but two yards away from the instrument. Most of the ladies who sang were able to accompany themselves skilfully and artistically on the piano; and some of them had fine thrilling voices, and sang with exquisite feeling. The local community might be described as filled with a common passion for music. Some of the men had acquired a celebrity for their delivery of particular songs; and Mrs. Carey frequently asked this or that guest to favour the company with his particular song, some ballad, perhaps of Burns or Byron or Moore, which had become absolutely identified with his name in the social circles which he adorned, and which no one else would think of venturing to sing in a company where he was present. The comic song prevailed a good deal amongst the men; but the women,

of course, only sang songs of sentiment, songs of love and tenderness and passion. The national or patriotic ballad did not get much chance of displaying itself in Captain Carey's drawing-room, because that gallant officer, claiming apparently to have held some sort of military rank at some time or other from his sovereign, did not encourage the spirit of aggressive patriotism which, it appeared to him, was showing itself too much among the young men and women of the south. Some of these young men and women regarded Captain Carey as a narrow-minded although good natured Conservative of the old-fashioned order. Indeed, some young men had been known to speak of him as a time-serving old humbug; but these were self-sufficient young men, who made fun of Captain Carey's poetry and insisted that he had never been in the army at all.

The music of Vincent Wallace's opera, *Maritana*, was then very popular in Irish assemblies, and some of the young ladies delighted the company with selections from its more easily accomplished ballads. It was an understood social rule on such occasions that each lady or gentleman who had sung had acquired by the performance the right of calling on some other lady and gentleman to come next in obliging the company; and in this way it happened that one of the men, who had a fine tenor voice, obtained an opportunity of singing Don Cæsar de Bazan's appeal to his guards to be favoured with a soldier's death. In this song he declares that "I only ask for that proud race which ends its blaze in me to die and not disgrace its chivalry." This was sung by Captain Carey's guest with genuine force and fervour, and it was greeted with cordial applause. But there was one listener to whose heart it went home with a thrill of especial emotion, and the man thus moved and penetrated was Mr. Desmond.

Now, as a rule, Mr. Desmond cared nothing about

singing, and was especially indifferent to drawing-room singing and to the performance of musical amateurs in general. Mr. Desmond had indeed many recollections of great singers whom he had heard in his early days at the opera houses of London, Paris, and Vienna; but even the pleasures of memory which were thus bequeathed to him consisted chiefly in the opportunities they gave him of making disparaging comments on the singers of the present, with the authority of one who had listened to their betters. In this instance, however, Mr. Desmond was really touched by some of the words of Wallace's hero. "I only ask for that proud race which ends its blaze in me!" He had heard the song scores of times before,—at least, he had been present while it was sung,—and he had never thought it worthy of any particular attention. It was for him just like all the popular songs of the day, and nothing more. But now there was full in his mind the impression of the talk he had had with Mononia, and the song suddenly appealed to him as the representative of a proud race which was to end its blaze in him. There was to be no more a Desmond Lodge, there was to be no more of the hospitality with which that proud race had been accustomed to blaze from time immemorial, but only an obscure riverside cottage, with a dethroned Desmond and his daughter striving to make both ends meet. Maurice, no doubt, would leave the old country, and go to seek his fortune in London, and would settle down contentedly to become a newspaper penny-a-liner, and not even remember the proud race which had ended its blaze with the passing of Desmond Lodge into the hands of the stranger. Yet such is the curious consolation which a certain heroic nature can derive even from the contemplation of its own fall that Mr. Desmond felt a thrill of something like pride, and even a gloomy pleasure in the very sound of the lines which seemed to illustrate the lonely grandeur

of his own position. After all, it is something to have fallen, because it proves that one must have stood erect. It is something to be the man with whom the glory of a proud race comes to an end.

Mr. Desmond did not reason the matter out in this way; but he felt reassured once more as to the reality of his lonely grandeur, and long after the song had died away into silence, he was murmuring over and over again the words which spoke of the proud race now ending its blaze in him. With certain natures there is no balm for hurt minds like that which may be given by self-conceit. Had Mr. Desmond left the drawing-room immediately after the singing of that song, he might have gone home in a good mood, attuned to bear with fortune's hardest blow. He might as well have gone home; for it was not his intention to wait and see any of the dancing, and Mononia could be safely left to her brother's care and escort. But Mr. Desmond lingered purposeless, and he heard another song which disturbed his mood of melancholy self-satisfaction.

This song was sung by Mononia. She, of course, could not escape an invitation to favour the company; and she sat to the harp, and sang. It has been told in a previous chapter that Mononia had announced to Phil Colston her intention of singing some song especially for him and at him in Captain Carey's drawing-room. This she intended to be a surprise to Phil, and at the same time to convey no particular idea to the rest of the company. Maurice had shown her a translation which Phil had been making of Horace's Carmen addressed to Apollo; and Mononia, admiring the translation very much, was partly amused and partly annoyed because Phil had not shown it to her. Maurice carelessly explained that Phil, no doubt, would submit it to her in good time, but that he was never likely to let so accomplished a poetess have a chance of looking at any

of his lines until he had polished them into as near an approach to perfection as possible. Mononia secured the rough version, however, and read it again and again, and set it to music of her own composition, and determined that Phil should hear it for the first time, and without any previous admonition or preparation, in Captain Carey's drawing-room. So she sat to the harp, and sang the words to her own music, a sweet, wild, and thrilling air, full of hope and yearning and high poetic emotion,— a simple air, indeed, as far as technical construction was involved, but touched all through with feeling and with melody. Phil listened with wonder and delight, knowing the words, at least the English words, to be his, and knowing that the music must be hers, and in his heart was so filled with rapture that he had to put a strong constraint over the expression of his features lest it might tell to the general company in that room, or to any one of them, the sweet secret that was his and hers. The closing verse told how the poet, praying at Apollo's shrine, asked,—

> "A heart for ever young,
> A soul still to its purpose true,
> A harp that ne'er shall be unstrung,
> Till time unnerve its master, too."

Mononia's voice swelled and soared as though she was really pouring out her own heart's prayer to the deity of song. Perhaps not even that deity himself could have conferred a happier moment on the translator of the poem than Mononia had given to him.

But Mr. Desmond, unluckily, had remained long enough to hear the song. He knew of course in a moment that it was a rendering of Horace's exquisite poem. He knew that Mononia had not studied Latin. In those days it would have been thought rather unwomanly, not to say improper, for a girl to study Latin.

He knew that Maurice did not write verses, and he had some vague impression of having heard that Philip Colston was making translations from Horace. Why had Mononia sung that song? Why had she sung it that night, then and there for the first time? The sudden conjecture forced itself into his mind that Mononia and Phil Colston must have thought more of each other than he had ever suspected, and that such a possibility did not bode well for Mr. Woodward's proposal, or for the happy ending to the darkly opening domestic drama of which Desmond Lodge was the stage just then. It would be unseemly and unbecoming of him to seek any explanation of the mystery at a social gathering, especially under the roof of so pretentious and middle-class a personage as Captain Carey; and Mr. Desmond left the house, and went his homeward way with a perturbed heart. Even though the proud race should end its blaze in him, it would be better, he thought, that Mononia should marry a rich Englishman than that she should put the chance away because she had fallen in love with a young fellow like Philip Colston, whose fortunes in life depended on the good will of his uncle. The only gleam of personal pride and self-satisfaction now left in Mr. Desmond as he returned home was in the reflection that at all events these young people could not keep any of their secrets from him.

## CHAPTER IX

### CAPTAIN CAREY'S BALL

THE ball — it was modestly called a dance on the invitations issued by Captain and Mrs. Carey — opened with a quadrille, which was then indeed the principal performance at such an entertainment, and was repeated again and again during the evening. Then there was, of course, the waltz, which, although it found great favour among the young men and women, was still looked upon by some of the leaders as a rather fast sort of interlude which parents of well-regulated principles might have to put up with, but could hardly applaud. The polka, too, was beginning to be popular, and was for some reason or other, defying logical exposition, regarded by some of the austere parents as less suggestive of impropriety than the waltz. Many of the young people preferred the Lancers to the quadrille, because it was not quite so formal, severe, and orderly. Almost every dancing party in those days and in that part of the world was sure to end with Sir Roger de Coverley, which was considered a most delightful and frolicsome dance, or rather caper, by the old and the young of every bright company. It was especially suited to the zenith of gaity likely to be reached by the dawn of morning, and was made bewilderingly fascinating by the duty it imposed on the girls to choose out at a critical moment of the sport the particular young man whom they desired to honour allegorically with their hands.

Some of the joyous dancers assembled in Captain Carey's ball-room will try this same dance in years not far distant, in ball-rooms across the Atlantic, and will find it known there as the Virginia Reel. In the mean time they were revelling and roystering on the floor of Captain Carey's great room as if, like Sir Philip Sidney's

shepherd, they were never to grow old, and as if no conditions were ever likely to arise which could render a home in their loved native country impossible any longer for them. No shadows of the future fell on that glorified wooden floor.

The seaport was a garrison town as well as a station for war vessels, and no dancing party of any real pretensions could be considered to have fulfilled its purpose unless it included among its active figures some of the officers of both services. In those days it was still the fashion for the defenders of the country to appear at dinner parties and in ball-rooms in their uniform, just as they had done when Rawdon Crawley and George Osborne still ornamented their social circles. It would be superfluous to say that the young ladies of the place were at once intense and outspoken in their admiration of the heroes in red and the heroes in blue, although perhaps, when the habits of the seaport were considered, it may be admitted that the navy had on the whole a greater attraction than the army for the unmarried womanhood.

Captain Carey had taken care to issue invitations freely to the officers of the barracks and the officers of the warships; and many of the younger men of both services, who would have gone anywhere for an evening of waltzing and flirtation, found themselves among the crowd which now began to make their work of dancing a rather difficult performance. Some of the elder officers of both services, who had received invitations, did not avail themselves of the opportunity because they entertained a certain scepticism as to Captain Carey's military title, and did not feel inclined to indorse by their presence his pretensions to a place among the armed defenders of the country. All the ladies agreed in declaring that the military officers waltzed divinely; and the divinest of the brave waltzers on this particular

night was Captain Jerningham, a young Englishman whose regiment had lately found a home in the local barracks. It is certain, however, that even the admirable Crichton himself could not have succeeded in winning unqualified and universal admiration if he were to display his admirable qualities in a ball-room; and therefore it may be admitted without hesitation that Captain Jerningham's personal appearance, manners, and skill as a waltzer were criticised with marked disparagement by some of the young men at Captain Carey's ball. Among these unappreciative critics must be ranked Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston. Philip had danced more than one quadrille and one waltz with Mononia, and was intensely happy while he had her for a partner, and no doubt in his calmer moments would readily have admitted that he could not expect Mononia to dance with nobody else, and that it would hardly suit the accepted proprieties if she were to dance only with him.

The practice of sitting out had not yet been established as a principle in the code of the ball-room, and the quiet talks obtained in this fashion were but stolen delights sweeter for the theft. Therefore, Phil Colston had no reasonable ground of complaint, even against the fates, because Mononia danced now and then during the evening with some one else; and he could hardly have made out any better cause of complaint merely because she had once or twice danced with Captain Jerningham. Still, it is certain that our young patriot did for the time feel rather out of humour when he saw Mononia dancing with Captain Jerningham, and did find occasion to remark to his friends that Jerningham seemed a very conceited sort of fellow, and that he was not by any means so good a waltzer as he had been led by previous report to expect.

But Phil Colston's disparagement of the brilliant young captain was nothing like that which Maurice Desmond

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scattered around him in his ball-room conversation. Some of the young ladies who were among Maurice's acquaintances, and who had a chance now and then of hearing these comments, smiled and looked knowingly at each other as if they knew all about the matter, and remarked in passing whispered sentences that Captain Jerningham was certainly devoting himself very markedly to Kathleen Fitzwilliam, and that the girl was quite conceited enough already and would only have her head completely turned by this tribute of what may be called foreign admiration. Now, after all this exposition, it need hardly be said that Kathleen Fitzwilliam was making herself the bright particular star of that evening's firmament. Kathleen Fitzwilliam was decidedly a very pretty girl, about Mononia's age, but not so tall, with a ripe, well-rounded figure, a graceful vivacity of movement, and eyes which sparkled with bewildering animation or even swam in soft appealing sentimentality. Kathleen was the daughter of a partner in a prosperous shipping business; and the story went about that her father could give her a large fortune if he chose to do so, but that his dealing towards her would be much influenced by the choice she might make of a husband. "Old Fitzwilliam," envious persons had been heard to say, "is firmly convinced that his daughter is the most charming girl in Munster; and he is quite determined that, if he can prevent it, so valuable an article shall not be disposed of on easy terms."

The Fitzwilliams, it may be said, were recent importations into the south of Ireland. Mr. Fitzwilliam had brought his wife and daughter from Dublin to push a business in the southern city; and his daughter had been at school in London, and had even had some teaching in Paris.

Now Mr. Fitzwilliam was a sort of connecting link to the class to which Captain Carey belonged and the local

gentry who had their homes quite outside the city. As a rule, the local gentry saw very little of the inhabitants of the city except in the way of business, seldom favoured any of the debating societies with their distinguished presence, and would never have thought of accepting an invitation to Captain Carey's dinner or ball. Fitzwilliam came because his daughter loved dancing, and her mother indulged her.

Maurice, however, had one brief spell of satisfaction while watching the career of Captain Jerningham as a dancer and as a partner of Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam. As the night wore on, a south country dance, as it was called, was started by Captain Carey, who acted as his own master of the ceremonies. What a merry thing that south country dance was! Down the middle — up again — hands across — stop, that 's wrong — down again — hands across — turn Miss O'Reilly, the tall lady who only gives you the tip of her fingers — set to your own partner — three couples down the middle — there, it's all wrong again, I do declare — so at least Captain Carey insisted. In this way, now right, now all going wrong, every one talking loudly and merrily to every one else, the country dance proceeded. Whether it went right or whether it went wrong, everybody seemed happy, except perhaps Captain Jerningham. That gallant officer, who had never seen or heard of the dance before, got through it very well on the whole, and seemed to enter into the spirit of the thing, although, to do him justice, his liking for it must have come chiefly from his good temper; for he never had the least idea on earth of what he was to do next. He frequently went wrong, was pushed here and there, until he sometimes became almost bewildered, was slapped on the back and told to "go it" by people whom he had never seen before, and not uncommonly presented his hand to the wrong lady.

Miss Kathleen Fitzwilliam, who knew all about the

dance, had employment enough in setting her partner right whenever he showed a tendency to go wrong; and it was quite a new delight to her to have the opportunity of directing the movements of this accomplished stranger, who must, she felt no doubt, have been a brilliant figure in many a London ball-room. But the gratification which Maurice Desmond felt was of quite a different nature. It was a positive delight to him to see that Captain Jerningham could go wrong, and that he had to be guided by his partner, and that he got pushed about this way and the other, and that there were moments when he even seemed likely to make himself and his partner look ridiculous.

Now why was the genial, generous Maurice Desmond in a mood so much out of tune with the harmony, not to say the jollity, of the evening, and why was he inclined to exult over any moment of supposed discomfiture to the gallant stranger in Her Majesty's uniform who was receiving the hospitality of the southern city? Of course, every reader of intelligence will easily guess that poor Maurice was jealous and angry because Kathleen had danced so often with Captain Jerningham, and evidently took so much pleasure in the partnership. Therein, no doubt, the reader will be quite right; but the reader, however intelligent, could not have got at the full explanation of Maurice's irritation unless he had known one or two particular chapters of Maurice's story. The truth is that Maurice did not meet Kathleen Fitzwilliam for the first time at Captain Carey's ball. Mr. Fitzwilliam had a delightful little summer resort far away on the shores of the great harbour. There he kept a yacht and one or two rowing-boats, and there Kathleen spent most of her summer and autumn holidays. Maurice's frequent expeditions to the harbour in his boat had made him well acquainted with Mr. Fitzwilliam's seaside retreat, and he had become acquainted also with the pretty and romantic Kathleen herself.

This of course might have occurred just in the ordinary way, for Maurice was a very likely young man to be welcomed by Mr. Fitzwilliam to his seaside home. But, then, the acquaintance was not made in the ordinary way. The youth and maiden met for the first time by mere chance in the cottage of a fisherman, where Maurice and one of his comrades had taken refuge from a sudden and severe rain-storm, and where, as the fates would have it, Miss Fitzwilliam and her maid had taken refuge only a few moments before. Thus, it will be seen, the first meeting of Maurice and Kathleen took place under conditions in harmony with romantic ideas, and having nothing in common with the prosaic introductions which begin acquaintanceships in ordinary social life. Maurice saw the young lady safely to her home on that memorable occasion, and he was frequent in his visits to that part of the harbour for the rest of the summer and autumn. Nothing would have been more easy than for Miss Fitzwilliam to invite the young man to call upon her mother and herself at their seaside place, and thus have the acquaintanceship sanctioned by the ordinary conventionalities. Miss Kathleen, however, preferred that, at least for the time, the meetings should go on under less commonplace conditions. It so happened, therefore, that she and Maurice met, purely by chance, of course, on many days and evenings, and that they rambled together on the seashore or through the woods, and that the meetings always seemed to take place before the late hour of the evening when Mr. Fitzwilliam usually returned from the city to the seaside.

Kathleen was always telling Maurice that he must come to her house, and be introduced to her father and mother; and Maurice always expressed a becoming anxiety to be thus presented to the young lady's parents. But the days went on, and the delightful rambles by the

waves and under the trees went on also; and the autumn came, and Mr. Fitzwilliam and his family went back to their town residence, before Maurice's formal introduction had ever been accomplished. Then the young lady went up to Dublin for some months in charge of her mother, to stay with relatives there; and it so happened that Maurice had no sight of her from the day of their last parting by the seashore until he saw her at Captain Carey's ball. Truly, he was not surprised to see her there; for she had written him a few friendly lines to announce her return, and to express quite casually a hope that she might meet him at Captain Carey's dance, to which, indeed, it is quite possible that Maurice might never have gone, were it not for the announcement in Miss Fitzwilliam's letter.

When he did see her for the first time that evening, he had no reason to be disappointed with her reception. They met in the drawing-room, when the singing had just begun; and there she presented him to her mother, a lady of about forty, looking curiously like a somewhat faded and sickly, not to say unwholesome, copy of her daughter, and still appearing a woman who had by no means surrendered her claim to be considered good-looking and attractive. Mrs. Fitzwilliam had received him with sweet graciousness, and told him that her daughter had often spoken of him to her, and that she was greatly pleased to have at last the opportunity of making his personal acquaintance. So far all had gone as well as the most exacting youth could have expected or even desired. Then came the dance, and the tormenting fact that Kathleen had danced very often with Captain Jerningham, and seemed much pleased by the attentions of the gallant officer. Maurice allowed himself to reflect in moody dissatisfaction over the proverbial fascination of the red coat for young women in general and for young Irish women in particular.

So the night was wearing away with little gratification for poor Maurice, and he was now speculating as to his chance of being allowed to take her in to supper. Suddenly a dance came to an end, and Captain Jerningham escorted Kathleen back to a seat next to her mother. Maurice happened to be passing that way; and he turned his head aside in order that he might not seem to be trying to catch Miss Fitzwilliam's eye, and also to avoid the fierce temptation to scowl at the too successful Captain Jerningham. Kathleen rose from her seat, came up to him, and touched his arm. He looked round, and thought he had never seen her look more charming. Her dark grey eyes were full of unspeakable friendliness for him. The poor youth's heart utterly gave way.

"Are you never going to ask me to dance with you —all the night?" she asked.

"But I have not had a chance," he replied, looking into her eyes, which did not lower before his. "You have been always engaged to somebody else." He was going to say "to Captain Jerningham"; but he checked himself, and did not give way to the impulse of jealous weakness.

"I was engaged for several dances to Captain Jerningham," she replied, with a manner of sweet unconcern, as if she had been merely speaking of Captain Smith or Captain Brown.

"Captain Jerningham seems to have engaged you for a good many dances in advance," Maurice observed with quiet emphasis.

"Captain Jerningham dined with us," she explained condescendingly, "and we brought him along with us in the carriage. But I have kept the next waltz for you if you are free to dance with me now."

"I have kept myself free for you all the evening," Maurice murmured with a certain cadence of complaint in his tone.

"I had to dance with him. Mamma hardly knows you as yet, and papa does not know you at all; and you must surely see that it would never do to make myself conspicuous. I am afraid you are rather wanting in finesse. It is just as well that I should not be wanting in it, too. The people here take notice of everything."

"Then you will give me the next waltz?"

"With the greatest pleasure. It is such a long time that we have not met." She was rather fond of adopting French forms of speech.

"And may I take you in to supper?"

"Not may," she replied, "but must. See, I will note it down on my programme." She took her pencil and wrote some words on the margin of her programme. "See, I have written it down."

Then she handed him her programme; and he read the words written on it: "Come to see us to-morrow. We have Friday evening parties, and mamma will invite you." Then the strains of the waltz began, and Maurice and she floated off in delightful whirls; and Maurice felt that the mere sense of existence was happiness. When the waltz came to an end, and while they were still surrounded by the dispersing crowd, she tore off the margin of her programme and put it into his hand, saying, "Keep that for me, and take me in to supper whenever you can,—as soon as you are in a perfect good humour again."

Never, certainly, was any young man in more perfect good humour than Maurice just at that time and for the rest of the evening. The mere fact that Kathleen danced the next dance with Captain Jerningham did not disturb, in the least, the gladsome spirits of her devoted admirer.

Maurice did not any longer mingle with the throng— He quite understood that he was to keep in the back—

ground until the hour for supper arrived, and that hour was not yet at hand. He thought it would be a relief to the exuberance of his spirits if he were to mount to the garden on the roof, and there commune for a few moments with nature, the immemorial confidant of the enraptured or despondent young lover. He came across Phil Colston and Achille Dubois, who were also seeking the roof garden; and they went up together.

"I am getting rather tired of this," said Phil as they mounted the stairs. "I suppose you are going to stay for supper."

Yes, certainly, Maurice was going to stay for supper.

"I shall stay to the very end; I want Mononia to have all the pleasure she can." Maurice was a devoted brother.

"Then I shall stay, too," Phil declared without suggestion of grievance in his tone. Phil, it will be seen, was a devoted friend.

So they mounted to the roof garden. There were other men already in the garden, most of them smoking cigars. The night air was not chill, but only cool and refreshing. The sight of the midnight sky was not, however, one to invite self-contemplation on the part of the happiest or the most despairing lover. The moment Phil and Maurice emerged into the open air, they found that the heavens had put on an aspect which must for the time call away the thoughts of the most self-conscious of mortals from the study of his own emotions. Nature had provided a pageant for their wonder and admiration which made the occasion all her own, and fastened the eyes of every beholder on the sight which she had to show. Phil and Maurice each drew a deep breath of wonder. The sky was all aflame with the pale blue and silver of the northern lights. The Aurora borealis had full possession of the heavens. The pageant seemed at one moment to be of fixed and motionless radiance;

and then in another moment it was all fantastic motion and change, all scattering sparkles, dazzling succession and interchange of crossing lights and meteoric showers. Where the sky could be seen, it was of a cold pallid blue, and appeared somehow to stand away at a farther distance from the living earth than the eyes of the gazers had ever before fancied it to be. Some vague sensation would come into the mind that the old heaven, as men knew it, had broken up into these splinters and flakes of glancing white fire, and revealed another and far more distant heaven, which now came out for the first time to mortal sight. The young men who stood upon the roof garden gazed for a while in silent wonder at this marvellous magnificent display above them and around them. Most of them had never seen any such apparition of the Aurora borealis before.

"It is like the breaking up of a world," said Maurice.

"It may be sent to warn us that this old world is breaking up," said Philip.

"Some old despotism goes up in blue flame," Achille Dubois declared.

If Mr. Desmond had been there, he would probably have thought that the skies proclaimed the fall of the house of Desmond.

## CHAPTER X

### REVOLUTION ABROAD — AND AT HOME

SOME of us can still remember that wonderful Aurora borealis of February, 1848; and history can never forget the events which followed it in Europe. The French monarchy collapsed. The king of the barricades became the exile of the barricades, and Louis Philippe found a refuge in England. The second republic was proclaimed, and the flame of revolution spread over the greater part of the European continent. Even in England the fire flamed up fitfully and with brief eccentric flashes in the short-lived outbreaks of chartism. In the sister island, as people had got into the way of calling it, the Young Ireland movement almost at once proclaimed itself a movement towards armed rebellion. The suppressed emotion of the young men in the south and west and middle of Ireland only needed the touch of revolution from France to convert it into an avowed attempt to accomplish the independence of the country by force of arms. The constitutional agitation, which had been conducted almost to the verge of revolution by Daniel O'Connell, had wholly spent its force, and had ended in an anti-climax. Nothing had come of it in the way of legislative improvement, and nothing would satisfy the young men (all the world seemed to be very young just then) but a determined effort to bring on a national crisis.

Looking back composedly now, one can see how utterly hopeless such a movement must have been in any case. But it seemed to the youth of that time, and to such of the elder men as had still preserved the capacity for feeling young, that, if such a movement could not succeed, nothing else could do any good, and that to risk everything was better than to acknowledge

that only quiet submission was the duty of manhood. The memory of the famine was still keen in every mind. In the cities and towns, men, women, and children had been seen to lie down on the pavements of the streets and die of starvation; and all over the waste country places there seemed to be, as a writer of the time described it, "only one silent, vast dissolution." The government, taken by surprise, had made blunder after blunder in hurried attempts to cope with the distress, and had wasted, in futile and bungling enterprises, money enough to save a whole people from starvation. Englishmen had been generous and lavish in private charity. Relief had been poured in liberally from America. The charitable from every part of Europe had made contributions; and, as the writer already quoted put it, "even the heart of the Turk at the far Dardanelles was touched, and he sent Ireland, in pity, the alms of a beggar."

The whole relief organisation proved unequal to the terrible demands of the famine, and in many places broke hopelessly down; and the result was that, in a space of time almost incredibly short, the population of Ireland was reduced by hunger and by emigration to half its number. Ireland was only just beginning to recover from the shock of the famine when the Revolution of France broke out; and its outbreak seemed like a signal to the young men of Ireland, proclaiming that only by such a course could Ireland be put in the way of genuine relief from the sufferings which they believed to be the direct result of oppressive and anti-national rule. There is no need to go more fully into all this melancholy story just now, and its memory is here recalled only because of the effect it had upon the fortunes of the men and women who are the principal figures in this narrative.

All Ireland south of the Boyne seemed to be suddenly

converted into the training-ground of a rebellious organisation. The young men of the towns and of the more populous country places were openly drilled of nights for armed insurrection. Funds were raised everywhere for the purchase of rifles from Birmingham factories; and the weapons were imported at first without let or hindrance on the part of the constituted authorities, who were too much puzzled and bewildered to take any general and practical course of action, and could hardly be brought to believe that the whole thing had any serious purpose in it. Clubs and associations were formed everywhere for the open teaching and propagation of armed rebellion. Then, when the constituted authorities had time to breathe and to recognise the fact that rebellion was in the air, there set in a season of hurried repressive legislation; and arrests and imprisonments became the common events of every day. As might well be expected in such a season of alarm and of panic, the action of the constituted authorities was often widely indiscriminate; and some of the men, elder and younger, who could best have been relied upon to keep the national movement within reasonable bounds, were among the first to be arrested and put on trial, or sent to prison without any form of serious judicial investigation. All this was to be expected at such a time of commotion and is common enough in the history of every passionate popular agitation, or at least was common in the history of such agitations during those somewhat distant days; but the immediate result of the course taken by the constituted authorities was to convert from ardent nationalists into avowed rebels many of those who had, up to the latest moment, still believed that the misgovernment of Ireland could be remedied by argument and appeal addressed to the intelligence of the ruling classes and to the Imperial Parliament.

In the midst of this national convulsion the crisis of

Mr. Desmond's life had come about without creating much excitement, even among his immediate neighbours. Desmond Lodge had been put up for sale, and the Desmond family had been quietly established in a small cottage on the banks of the river and at some distance farther away from the city. Two incidents had much impressed Mononia Desmond during the progress of these arrangements. When first it began to be known that Desmond Lodge was soon to pass away from the ownership of the family, Mononia received one morning a solemn visit from Mrs. Murtagh Ryan, who, with her husband, had always carried on the domestic work of Desmond Lodge. Mrs. Ryan was somewhat awkward and embarrassed in manner, and her young mistress at first fell into the natural mistake of supposing that the good old serving-woman had come to express her deep regret at the prospect of their immediate parting. Now Mononia, as we know, had no intention of getting rid of Murtagh Ryan and his wife, and was full of the confident hope that, when the expensive ways of living associated with Desmond Lodge had been wholly given up, and when she and Maurice had gone to work earnestly for the purpose of helping to make a living, it would be in her power still to keep the old man and woman with her, and to pay them their wages just as before. She was about to anticipate Mrs. Ryan's explanation, and to reassure the good woman as to their future relations, when Mrs. Ryan recovered her breath, conquered her embarrassment, and began her story:—

"You see, Miss Monony, it's this way. My ould man and me, we've been living with you, as I may say, before you was born; and we want to live with you until the both of us is dead. But now we hear the masther and you and Masther Maurice you're going to live in a smaller house, where there'll be mighty little work to

do; and, as we've been saving money all the time we've been here, and getting plenty of fine ateing and drinking for nothing, we just thought, my ould man and me, that we'd like to stop on to the end and do whatever work is to be done. And we don't want a penny of wages for it at all at all, and it would be against our conscience, Miss Monony dear, to take a penny of wages from you when there's next to nothing to do; and so, if you'll only let us live on, me ould man and me, we'll be thankful from our hearts, and we'll pray for you morning and night, and God bless you!"

Mononia could hardly speak for a while, her heart was so full. Then she offered her grateful thanks to the dear old woman and her husband, and tried to explain to her that Mr. Desmond would still be able to pay his two faithful servants as before, and that it had never occurred to any of the family to think of parting with them. Mrs. Murtagh Ryan burst into tears of gratitude, and then, recovering herself after a few moments, tried to become argumentative on the subject of the wages, and to explain to Mononia that so long as Murtagh and she were allowed to live in the house, wherever or whatever the house might be, they did not want any wages, and should not know what to do with them, and that it would be a sin on their conscience to accept any more money after all they had been getting and saving during the past years. Finally, Mononia had to give way so far as to pretend to accept a sort of compromise, and to agree that the wages question should be postponed for the present on the understanding that, happen what might, Murtagh Ryan and his wife were still to be the servants of the Desmond family.

The other incident might be described as of the same order, but of a somewhat different species. In the south of Ireland at that time almost every family which was above the level of actual poverty had certain out-

of-door retainers who might be correctly described as privileged or licensed beggars. These were generally old men or old women who had outlived the days of their work, and had an unconquerable hatred for the bare thought of receiving relief from the parish, as it was called. Certain of these forlorn but not worthless outcasts of society were privileged to call every day at the house of some protector, and receive as alms whatever was left from the meals of the family and the servants. These old men or old women, sometimes having a grandchild or two with them, the orphaned offspring of dead parents, were always understood to be paupers by no fault of their own,—persons who deserved sympathy and charity, and who would have worked and lived independently but for hopeless misfortune. The fact that such a person was a privileged expectant of alms at this or that private dwelling was in itself a sort of badge of respectability and was supposed to distinguish him or her from the mere professional beggar. Such recipients of charity occupied, in fact, something like the social position held by Edie Ochiltree in Walter Scott's *Antiquary*, and received a kindly toleration from the general public.

Desmond Lodge had, as might naturally be expected, its own little contingent of such retainers. One of these was an old woman who had been a widow since Mononia's birth, and whose nearest relations were only one degree, at most, less poor than herself. During later years she had lost these few relations one by one, and for a long time had been living absolutely alone, doing what poor scraps of work she could, and helped materially to carry on her poor existence by the charity which she received at the door of Desmond Lodge. When the news got about that Desmond Lodge was to be given up, and that the Desmond family were to seek a smaller home, this poor old woman begged for a

few words with Mononia,— a request which was readily granted; and then she, too, told her story. Now, for the credit of human integrity, we ought perhaps to be sorry to have to say that the representation which the poor woman made to Mononia could hardly be regarded as literally truthful. Mononia herself saw through it in a moment, and it brought the tears into her eyes; for the representation which the poor old lady made was that she had lately been much troubled by the thought that she was living all alone in the garret-room of a house where there were many other lodgers about whose individual characters and callings she knew little or nothing, and that she had become seriously alarmed for the safety of the small savings which she kept tied up in an old stocking. She explained at much length and with the awkward manner of one who is trying to be too plausible that she was a woman who could live on little or nothing, that she had saved up all this treasure because she had no occasion to spend it, but that now she was afraid, if the existence of the stocking became known among her fellow-lodgers, there might be serious danger to her life. "What safety was there for a poor ould woman if some robber took it into his head to get possession of her hoard?" Therefore, the favour she came to beg of Mononia was that she would take charge of the whole sum of money,— it amounted in all to nine pounds, fifteen shillings, and some pence,— and just be kind enough to keep it for her and make use of it in any way she liked on the faith of the assurance that, whenever the owner wanted her money back again, she would come to Mononia and ask for it.

The good old woman's hands were trembling as she produced her little store from the remains of an old handkerchief, and proceeded to count it out, coin by coin, on the table.

"There it is, Miss Monony," she said. "And, sure, it

will be a load off poor old Norey's mind, entirely, when she knows that you have it safe for her, and that she may go to bed of nights without fear of being murdered for her money before she wakes up in the morning."

Mononia's heart was deeply touched. She took the money, and promised to keep it safely for poor old Norey, knowing full well that the whole story was only an impulse of gratitude from Norey, the expression of a longing to lend a helping hand to the young mistress, whom she believed to be in distress, and knowing well, too, that nothing could hurt the faithful old creature's heart so much as to refuse to become the guardian of the treasure.

"Yes, Norey," she said with as cheerful a smile as she could summon up. "I'll keep the money safely for you, and you can have it again as soon as you want it."

"Oh, then, God bless you, Miss Monony. And, sure, you needn't give it back to me until I come and ask you for it."

So the interview was over, and the money changed hands. Mononia told the whole story soon after to Maurice and to Phil Colston. Each of the young men made, in his turn, a characteristic comment.

"I read the other day in the *Times*," said Maurice, "that the Irish are a nation of beggars. If all beggars had hearts like poor old Norey, it might not be such a very bad thing to be a nation of beggars, after all."

When Phil heard the tale, he jumped up, flung his right arm over his head, and exclaimed, in the words of one of his favourite poets,—

"Where's the coward would not dare to fight for such a land?"

Mononia meanwhile was much troubled in her mind about the disposal of the furniture, the books, and the pictures in Desmond Lodge. The cottage which was to be her home for some time to come would not hold

all the tables and sofas and chairs and carpets which were easily stowed away in Desmond Lodge, and therefore a careful selection would have to be made. At the same time Mononia was perfectly determined that the new life of the family must begin on a basis of the most rigorous commercial integrity, and in that purpose she knew that she had the full support of her brother. Every penny which could be raised must be given to meet the claims of the creditors; and any articles which she particularly wished to retain must be bought out by her at their full value, so that the just claims of the creditors should not suffer in the least because of her desire to carry some old household favourites with her into the new abode. She did not consult her father on these points, because she knew only too well that his policy under such conditions would be a mere policy of postponement; that is to say, of waiting for something to turn up which might avoid the necessity of any definite and self-sacrificing course of action. Her desire was that everything should be done promptly and finally, and that no opportunity should be given for any new arrangement with the creditors which could only end in putting off the evil day.

There had grown up within her a positive loathing for the system of genteel pauperism which had been the life of Desmond Lodge, and she wanted to feel perfectly assured that the era of general independence had set in. Then, again, a secret fear was haunting her that, as soon as Mr. Woodward came to hear of what was going on, he would personally interfere, and buy up the whole concern, Desmond Lodge, furniture, and all, and make it a gift to her father, who would probably be only too willing to accept the substantial favour. She had read a good many novels; and had learned from their instruction, even if she could not have got so much knowledge from her own inspiration, what the course of a generous

rejected lover would naturally be at such a crisis. Even if Mr. Woodward were quietly to favour her general design, Mononia thought it only too probable that he would buy up every piece of furniture which he thought she would be likely to care for, and make an anonymous gift to her. All this she determined to avoid, and it could only be avoided by the utmost promptitude of action. She had a genuine respect and regard for Mr. Woodward, but she felt that she could not endure at such a moment any fresh obligation to him. On the other hand, she particularly wanted to keep all her father's favourite books for him, and all the family pictures, such as they were, and her own harp, and some pieces of furniture which she knew that her brother especially regarded. Her great problem was how to retain possession of these at their full commercial value without having to put herself under obligation to any one with whom she was not on terms of absolute and affectionate confidence. Phil Colston was out of the question; for he had no money of his own, and was wholly dependent on the kindness of his uncle, who had been lately much displeased by Phil's impassioned nationalism, seeing that he, the uncle, had long been looking forward to a promotion from the government as the object of his reasonable ambition.

When she came to think the matter over, she found that there was only one friend on whose advice and co-operation she could reckon with perfect confidence, who would enter into all her feelings, who could easily ascertain the market value of all the things she wished to retain, and especially would be an authority on the value of books, and who could, without any great sacrifice to himself, act quietly as her agent, buy up for her the things she wanted to keep, and who would not only wait with good will until his expenditure could be repaid, but would also accept the repayment when it could

be made, and would understand her unwillingness to undergo any superfluous obligation. This one friend was the schoolmaster, Mr. Conrad, from whose teaching her brother and Phil Colston had learned pretty well all they knew in the way of literature and history, and had learned, what was more important still, to love reading for its own sake, and to find in the past some light for the present.

Mononia was a young woman of remarkable promptitude in decision and in action. As soon as she had made up her mind on this point, she sat down and wrote a letter to Mr. Conrad, which she sent off by Murtagh Ryan, telling the schoolmaster that she wanted to ask his advice on one or two matters of interest to her, and that she would call on him any hour he might be pleased to appoint on the following day.

## CHAPTER XI

### MR. CONRAD

MR. CONRAD was a man of seventy, who had the peculiarity of looking older in the face and younger on the frame than such a time of life would have suggested. He was very tall, decidedly over six feet in height, and seemed built for an athlete rather than for a gentle schoolmaster. His movements showed vigour and elasticity, which had still something almost youthful about them. His brows were covered by a mass of snowy white hair, which had even yet a tendency to curl; and his clean-shaven face was wholly bloodless. His habitual expression was one of gravity, almost of melancholy; and, when his face was brightened by a genial smile, it was a smile which had in it more of pathetic sweetness than of exhilaration, or of ordinary good humour. When the schoolmaster was deep in thought, the lines from the lips to the chin, on either side, seemed to suggest a certain terseness of character; and, when the eyes lighted up under emotion or excitement of any kind, they gleamed as if their glance might well have heralded or accompanied a decisive word of command at a thrilling moment.

Mr. Conrad went through all his studies and his daily work without the use of glasses, and any newly enlisted scholar found himself much out of his reckoning if he fancied that at the farthest end of the long school-room he could idle at his desk and conceal his idleness from his teacher's all-penetrating glance. There was a common impression among those who knew him that Mr. Conrad's past life would tell a strange story if only Mr. Conrad had been inclined to narrate it. All that was known about him with certainty was that he had been much mixed up in political movements during his early days,

and that he had been "out" in the rebellion of ninety-eight, and that he had to leave his native country and to live abroad for many years. In those far-off days a little travel counted for a great deal; but Mr. Conrad seemed to have put into his life an amount of journeying which would be regarded as considerable even in our own globe-trotting times. He had not only been all over Europe, but he knew Egypt and the Holy Land, was familiar with New York and Boston, and had seen the Rocky Mountains and even the Andes. How and why, after all this wide travel and after long residence in some of the most interesting capitals of the world, he had made up his mind, in his advancing years, to come back to his quiet native city and set up as a teacher of Greek and Latin there, nobody ever liked to ask Mr. Conrad; and Mr. Conrad never seemed anxious to volunteer any information on the subject.

Mr. Conrad was very popular among the families in the city to whose boys he gave classical instruction after his own fashion, but outside that circle he never seemed to care for making acquaintances. He never advertised for pupils or sought in any way to increase the number of his students; and he often explained, when pressed by new applications, that he did not desire to have a larger school-room than that which was, at the moment, well filled with occupants. He had odd ideas on the subject of education. "I don't want to teach the boys," he was accustomed to say. "I only want to put them in the way of learning for themselves. If Providence has given me wit enough to do that, I am quite content; and I hope the boys and their parents will have reason to be satisfied in the end."

Mr. Conrad, when he first set up school, fairly astonished the good neighbours in the quarter in which he had settled down. To begin with, he would have no corporal punishment whatever in his school. He de-

clined to enter into any controversy on the question as to "sparing the rod and spoiling the child"; for he maintained that the making or marring of a boy's nature and character belonged to the life of the family, and not to the few hours spent over Greek and Latin authors in his school. "With the help of the rod," he would argue, "you can make a boy hate Homer and Virgil all his life long; but you can't make him love and appreciate Homer and Virgil." Then again he would never compel his boys to learn long lessons "by heart," as the phrase used to go. "Get a boy to love an author," he would say, "and you can safely leave it to the boy to learn as much of him by heart as his memory and his brains can carry." In point of fact, all that Mr. Conrad ever attempted to do was to make his boys fond of study for its own sake, fond of learning for the ever-increasing pleasure it gave them to learn; and in this object he certainly succeeded to the satisfaction of at least all the more intelligent parents who sent their boys to his school. Mr. Conrad talked with his boys quite informally, at intervals, during the hours of study, and was always anxious to draw them out as to what they had been reading, either at school or at home. No boy could tell at what moment of the day the schoolmaster might not come down upon him with a question, put in the softest and most genial tone, about some passage in a book which had been a subject of common study or which had been recommended to this particular lad for his reading at home. "I want to get at their minds,—at their minds," he would say. "All boys have minds, if you only know how to get at them; and, once you succeed in waking up a boy's mind, the chances are really many to one that it will keep awake on its own account afterwards."

In the rare cases where a boy showed himself unable or perversely unwilling to learn anything or to take any

interest in books, Mr. Conrad's course was simple and straightforward. He asked the boy's parents to remove him from the school, telling them frankly that their son was only taking up, to no purpose, the place which some other boy would be glad to have, who could make use of the opportunities it gave him. Even then, however, there was nothing of the pedant about Mr. Conrad. He assured the parents of the unsatisfactory boy that there was no reason whatever why their lad might not make an honourable living for himself and become a good member of society in some occupation which did not require, as a condition of success, any familiarity with the great authors of Greece and Italy. "But, then, you see," he would good-humouredly explain, "my little school is only kept open for the teaching of Greek and Latin, and I could not be of any use to a pupil whose mind is set against such teaching; and so I prefer his room to his company, just as, if I were a dancing-master, I should refuse to receive any boy who had made up his mind that he would not learn to dance. The lad who would not learn to dance might nevertheless become a good writer or a good lawyer, and the boy who would not learn Greek or Latin might become a most successful merchant or a capital naval officer. But a teacher, whatever his line, only wants to have pupils whom he can teach; and that is the reason why I don't want you to throw away your boy's time on me, just as I don't want to throw away my time on your boy."

Many of the citizens had sense enough to see that in Mr. Conrad's school an intelligent lad was more likely to become in love with the books he studied than in some teaching institution where a severer discipline was maintained, and where the rules of grammar rather than the meaning and the style of the author were the main object of study. A considerable part of each day in Mr. Conrad's school was occupied in what might be called

conversation classes. Mr. Conrad talked about the books which the boys were then studying, and he invited the boys to talk with him. He put many questions to them, and they put questions to him; and he illustrated many an important passage of the day's reading by his own wide and keen observation as a traveller. When they read the *Odyssey* or one of the Greek tragedies, Mr. Conrad made the boys enter thoroughly into the spirit of the poem by describing to them, from his own vivid recollections, the very scenes which were the stage of the action. He tried to make his pupils see the Greek Islands, and the plain of Troy, and the seas that broke round them, as if the boys were themselves spectators of the living pictures; and, when he had brought them to form in their mind some conception of the scenes as they were in his time, he took them further back, and tried to people these scenes as they were peopled in the days of their poets. It was so, too, of course, with the Latin authors. He had something to tell the boys about every page of Cæsar or Virgil,—something that he himself had seen and remembered, and which helped to bring the author's meaning home with a vivid impressiveness to the mind of the young reader. A favourite occupation of his, also, was to compare some passage of a Greek or Latin author with some lines from Shakespeare or Milton, or Burke or Johnson, and thus to make the boys, almost unconsciously, students of English literature while they were studying the literature of Greece and Rome. Nor did he fail to interweave among his discourses and his questionings many references to that genuine Celtic literature which was even then beginning to assert its revived claims to remembrance, admiration, and national sympathy.

It would be almost superfluous to say that some of the professional schoolmasters of the city talked with dignified contempt about Mr. Conrad's method of im-

parting classical instruction, and they declared that many of his pupils went through their full course of teaching at his hands and came out without knowing the essential rules of grammar.

"I am afraid there is a great deal of truth in what they say," Mr. Conrad observed one day, when some good-natured friend informed him of the strictures which certain high educational authorities were passing on his method of teaching. "The fact is, I was never much of a scientific grammarian myself. I want every boy to understand and love the authors themselves; and I am afraid I should have a poor chance of a boy's falling in love with *Robinson Crusoe* if I were to begin by setting him to parse the opening page, and make him learn by heart all about the verb and the nominative case. My dear man, let us get the story first, and the nominative case will find its way in somehow; but, if you begin with too much about the nominative case, you may perhaps never get into the story."

The day after he had received Mononia's letter, to which he had sent an immediate reply, Mr. Conrad was waiting to see her in his little sitting-room. His house was in an old-fashioned part of the city, and was itself a very old-fashioned house which had seen good company in far distant days. He had bought the house cheaply; for people who had any money would not live in that quarter of the town, and the house was therefore to be had on much lower terms than would have been asked for a diminutive residence of genteel and modern structure in a region patronised by the more rising class of citizens. Mr. Conrad's sitting-room had shelves and books for its principal furniture, and its one artistic ornament was a beautiful little model in Parian marble of the Parthenon at Athens. Mononia had often seen and fondly admired this miniature Parthenon, and had often in her younger days delighted Mr. Conrad by ask-

ing him all manner of questions about it, and leading him into descriptions of the real Parthenon and the Acropolis on which it stands, and the sea and the islands which can be seen from it. When she entered his room this day, her eyes involuntarily turned to the little model; and Mr. Conrad felt pleased to see the loving glance she gave to it. Then he set a chair for her with his manner of old-fashioned courtesy, and sat beside her.

"I was expecting a visit from you, Mononia," he said gravely. "I felt sure you would like to come and have a talk with me just now."

"Then you have heard of something, Mr. Conrad?"

"Well, yes, I have heard of something vaguely; and I felt sure that, if you thought I could be of any use to you, you would give your old friend a chance of offering his advice. So you see, dear child, your letter was not anything of a surprise to me; and I need not tell you what a pleasure it is to me to have a visit from you."

Then Mononia told him her whole story,—how Maurice and she were determined not to live any longer a life of useless expense and consequent dependence,—how they had prevailed on Mr. Desmond to get rid of Desmond Lodge and to live in a small cottage, and how generously Mr. Desmond had consented to sacrifice all his lifelong habits and his personal tastes and settle down to a life of seclusion and of rigid economy. Mononia spoke on this point with perfect sincerity, for she really believed in her heart that her father had acted in a noble spirit of self-sacrifice. Mr. Conrad listened to all she was telling him with approving nods of the head; and, even when she dilated on the magnanimity of her father's submission, he still preserved, as well as he could, an appearance of absolute sympathy.

"You and Maurice were quite in the right," he said, "and the decision you have taken is just what I should

have expected from both of you. Every friend — I mean every true and reasonable friend — of Mr. Desmond must have felt, this long time back, that some such decision would have to be taken. Of course, it is very hard on Mr. Desmond; for he has long been used to an easy and happy life, and he always loved to be hospitable and to diffuse happiness among his friends. And, then, he is not strong in health and is getting into years, and you have no idea, Mononia, what an effort it costs elderly people like him and me to renounce any ways of life to which we have become accustomed. I wonder what on earth I should do if it were suddenly made known to me that I was called upon by duty to go and live in some other house and give up this, to which I have been so long habituated, and to live some life quite different to the life I have been leading these many years. Even if it were to lead an easier and much more luxurious life, what a trouble that would be! Suppose by some strange freak of destiny I were suddenly compelled to become Lord Mayor of London, just think, Mononia, what a task it would be for me to reconcile myself to the change?"

Mononia looked sympathetically into his kindly eyes. She was well accustomed to his odd, quiet humour; and she knew perfectly well that he talked in this way merely to give her an opportunity of collecting her thoughts and make her work of explanation easy.

"So you see," he went on to say, "we could hardly expect Mr. Desmond to reason all this question out for himself and to start an entirely new way of living on his own unaided inspiration. Therefore, it was quite right of you and Maurice to bring the whole subject directly under his consideration, and give him the help of your advice, your encouragement, and your support in carrying out this good purpose. It must make him happy, indeed, to know that he has a daughter and a son who

are so willing to devote themselves to a hard and, in a certain sense, a narrow life, in order that his closing years may be relieved from embarrassment and trouble and may be placed in honourable independence. Well, you settled all that; and your story is bright so far. Now, then, tell me, what you propose to do with yourselves,— you and Maurice?"

Mononia laid before him all her vague plans about getting pupils and giving lessons in drawing, French, and so on, and trying to write for magazines and newspapers, also Maurice's ideas about turning definitely to literature, and all the rest of it. To be sure, there was not much money in all this to be going on with; but, then, Mr. Desmond had his official position, which gave him an income quite large enough to maintain him in comfort so long as they lived quietly and moderately in a small house, and gave up all idea of entertaining and being entertained in the social sense. Mononia assured her old friend that she believed her father would be much happier in the new kind of life, when once he had settled down to it, than he could ever have been while he was living beyond his means and always expecting or passing through some financial crisis. Mr. Conrad encouraged her to talk freely on this subject; but he kept to himself some information which had come only too certainly to his knowledge a short time before,— information which made it quite clear to him that the final financial crisis was much nearer and more pressing than Mononia or Maurice had probably anticipated, and was, moreover, of a different nature from that to which Mononia had made frank reference. There had, in fact, to Mr. Conrad's certain knowledge, been serious representations made to the local authorities to the effect that a man like Mr. Desmond, living utterly beyond his means, perpetually threatened by impatient creditors, and at any moment liable to come in for some legal pro-

ceedings which might amount to a public scandal, was not exactly the sort of person to hold a responsible office. Mr. Conrad knew that these representations had been made by men who were not personal enemies of Mr. Desmond, and who acted only from a sense of public duty; and he was on the eve of going to Mr. Desmond, and urging him strongly, for the sake of himself and his family, to make some arrangements and adopt some mode of life which might prevent these complaints being pressed against him.

Mr. Conrad had just made up his mind to take some such step when he received Mononia's letter, and he felt sure that the letter must have something to do with the state of Mr. Desmond's affairs. Then Mononia came to see him; and he learned from her own lips that she had induced Mr. Desmond to take the very steps which could best tend to maintain him in his official position, and he felt an intense admiration for the spirit and the good sense of the young woman which had accomplished the very result he had himself been desirous to bring about. He did not speak of all this to Mononia, because he did not want to discourage her or to darken the prospects of her new life by telling her that some of Mr. Desmond's best friends had lately felt compelled to turn against him; but he expressed his cordial approval of the course which she had taken, and he promised her every help in his power to enable her to carry it through with perfect success. Of course, he assured her that he would promptly and quietly act as her agent in securing for her the books and the other properties which she personally desired to retain; and he told her that this should be done in a manner which would secure to the creditors the full money value of the articles withheld from public sale, and thus satisfy her conscience and leave her under no obligation to anybody.

"To any one but *you*," Mononia interposed; and she took his hand in hers, and pressed it warmly.

"There is no obligation to me, Mononia," Mr. Conrad replied, "and there never could be any. Anything that I could do for you would be done out of pure friendship and affection, and would be done to please myself even more than to please you. I am an old man; and I have hardly any pleasures left in life, except what is to be got from reading books and from trying to give pleasure to those whom I care for, as I do for you and your brother. So that you see I am a selfish old man, Mononia; and, in trying to please you, I am only trying to please myself, and you owe me no thanks whatever for anything I can do. You might as well think of being under obligation to your brother Maurice."

"You have always been so kind a friend to us," she said. "Since ever I can remember you have been our friend. My poor dear mother always told me that you were a friend on whom we could rely forever."

"I knew your mother long before you were born, Mononia; and her happiness was always very dear to me. I often think that I am looking at her and talking with her when I look at you and talk with you, dear child; and her memory makes the old city a sacred place for me. You don't know yet, Mononia, but you will come to know some time that the one charm about growing old is found in the sweet and sacred memory it brings with it of the days when we were young and the friends we knew then. I have thought of this often when I heard you sing that line in Moore's poem about the friends who in our springtime knew us."

Then Mr. Conrad seemed to feel as if he had been saying too much, and perhaps becoming sentimental; for he got up suddenly, walked to the window, and looked out as if he saw some curiously interesting sight in the dull and commonplace street. He returned immediately, sat down beside Mononia once more, and began to talk, but for the time it was upon a different subject.

"Things are looking bad all round us, Mononia,— in political life, I mean. This revolutionary fever all over the country — Continent — is infecting us here in Ireland; and I am afraid some of our young fellows will get into trouble. Don't suppose I am wanting in sympathy with them or that I am merely giving out lessons of elderly wisdom. I was in very serious trouble myself when I was a young man, for the same cause; and I am not in the least ashamed of it. Old as I am, I would do the same thing all over again if I saw any reasonable chance; but that is just what I do not see at the present time. Only this, perhaps, too, you will set down as merely elderly wisdom. I don't suppose it would be of any use my offering sage advice to your brother or to Phil Colston, or even to you, Mononia; for I don't imagine that you have quite escaped all the revolutionary contagion."

"What can a woman do?" Mononia asked. "She can only sit at home and listen helplessly to the sounds that are rising all around her in the world outside; and men will go their way, and not stop to take advice from her."

"Come now," Mr. Conrad said more cheerfully, "does that mean to tell me that you would give prudent counsel at the present moment if you had the chance?"

"Tell me what you would call prudent counsel," Mononia asked earnestly. "I could never fail to give full attention to your advice, for I know your sympathy is always with us."

"I am afraid my advice just now would be of that rather vaguely prudent order which the foreign office generally gives to its diplomatic agents abroad,— to be resolute, but not rash, not to take any step without due consideration, to observe carefully what is going on, but not to commit one's self too far to anything, and all that sort of counsel which could hardly carry any clear enlightenment with it, especially to our impetuous young

fellows at such a crisis as the present. I think the best advice I can give you, Mononia, would be not to urge your brother and other young men on to any extreme course, and to make your influence, as far as you can, one of prudence and moderation, and, above all things, to set your face against any sort of secret association. At such a crisis as this you may take it for granted that, wherever there is a secret organisation, there is a spy at the centre of it."

"I am quite sure," said Mononia, firmly, "that Maurice and his friends have no liking for secret organisations, and that all they do will be done openly and in the face of day."

"Well, well," Mr. Conrad replied, with the manner of one who is dismissing the subject for the time, "I suppose I can only ask you to keep them up to that resolve as far as ever you can. I cannot ask you not to sympathise with their purposes, for I cannot refuse my own sympathy in the same way; but the time is full of danger, and the odds against us are so well-nigh overwhelming, and I don't want to see another generation of brave young Irishmen wasted on any hopeless enterprise."

Then he turned the conversation back to the purely domestic affairs; and after a little more questioning and answering the interview came to an end, Mr. Conrad having obtained a promise from Mononia that she would not fail to consult him whenever any question of doubt or difficulty came up in her mind.

When Mononia went to her new home to make final preparations for her settlement there, she found that all Mr. Desmond's books and her harp and the few properties which were especially valued by Maurice were already awaiting her. She found, too, a gift which she had not expected. The model of the Parthenon in its glass case stood upon one of the tables, and with it was a brief letter from Mr. Conrad, telling her that he had

long meant this offering to be hers, and that it had been meant first as a gift to an earlier generation. Mononia was much touched by the words, although she did not then quite realise their full meaning. She accepted the model of the Parthenon readily and thankfully, knowing well that Mr. Conrad would only feel hurt if she made any scruple or difficulty about taking from him his beautiful artistic treasure. She did not learn till long afterwards that when Mr. Conrad returned to Ireland he had come back in the hope of finding her mother still free to listen to the story of the love he had long felt for her, and had never before been in a position to put into words. That story, never told at the time, was the history of the one deep love which had ever brightened the schoolmaster's lonely life. When he returned to his native city, he found that Mononia's mother was already engaged to Mr. Desmond; and he then made up his mind to live his life in the old town, and to be the friend of the woman whom he could not marry and for her sake the friend of him she loved.

Mr. Desmond settled down to his new home with every appearance of perfect resignation to the altered conditions of his existence. Indeed, he felt, on the whole, even a more dignified personage than he had believed himself to be up to that time. He regarded himself as a sort of deposed chieftain or dethroned king, who was greater even in his fall than he had been in his elevation; and he found many passages in Byron and in Moore, and even in his much-prized Horace, which seemed to harmonise with him in his reduced state, and gave him new courage to bear it with dignity. It was perhaps fortunate for him that his own affairs absorbed his attention so completely as to leave him for a while without much thought to bestow on the events which were happening around him. Mononia and Maurice were much relieved to find that he took things so quietly,

and that he never grumbled over the altered conditions of his domestic affairs. Neither of them probably, would have quite understood that strange quality of what is called the artistic temperament which enables many a human being of peculiar nature to put up with any external discomfort or even humiliation so long as the peculiar being can feed its mind on the flattering contemplation of its own inherent dignity and of its own entire superiority to the commonplace creatures in the world outside itself. Mr. Desmond was happy in the conviction that no one but himself could have accepted his fallen fortunes with such a proud serenity and such an unbroken spirit. He regarded himself as Napoleon might have done, if his turn had been that way, on the island rock of St. Helena.

Meanwhile the news from Dublin and from most parts of the country became more and more exciting. Organisations had been formed in the Irish capital which openly proclaimed and avowed the determination to prepare an armed movement for the independence of Ireland. Branches of the central association were spreading in all the southern, midland, and western cities, towns, and villages. Phil Colston said in one of his speeches that the beacon lights were flaming from hill to hill.

## CHAPTER XII

### "A PLACE IN THY MEMORY, DEAREST"

THE movements all over the country had the effect which might have been expected on the different personages who appear in this story. Thus far, they had no effect whatever on Mr. Desmond, which was exactly what might have been expected in regard to him. He remained like the Indian fakir, of whom we used to read a good deal at one time, rapt away from the ordinary doings of those around him, and absorbed in the contemplation of his own personality. Phil Colston and Maurice Desmond had become prominent speakers at all the local meetings convened to forward the principles and the purposes of Young Ireland.

Mr. Woodward presented himself in the light of a friendly English radical, whose creed was that peoples, and not privileged classes, ought to have the making of the laws, and who had always frankly avowed his approval of the Chartist movement at home. Mr. Woodward, of course, deprecated any rash resort to physical force as a means of obtaining the desired political reforms; but he always gave himself out as a sympathiser with the principles of the movement, and he kept on terms of close friendship with some of its most conspicuous local leaders. His avowed sympathy with the Young Ireland movement brought him some personal reward, inasmuch as it gave him frequent opportunities of visiting the Desmonds in their new home and of receiving cordial expressions of thankfulness from Mononia. It had been much of a disappointment to him that the whole arrangements for the sale of Desmond Lodge had been conducted with such peremptory haste as to leave him no chance of stepping in as the

friendly purchaser who could crave the privilege of handing back the place to its former owner. He had quickness of perception enough to see that the whole transaction had been so suddenly carried on for the very purpose of preventing any such kindly intervention; and, as he well knew that Mononia must have been the guiding spirit in the whole arrangement, he thought it better to say nothing to her about his friendly intentions or his sincere regrets. He had too much good sense to think of renewing his offer of marriage to Mononia just yet; but he was still not without hope for the future, and in the mean time was not altogether unsatisfied with his present position as English sympathiser and personal adviser.

Willie Woodward had become an irrepressible young rebel, and had been gravely lectured by Mononia on the unwisdom of his extreme partisanship; for he professed to regard Phil Colston and Maurice Desmond as slow and laggard patriots, who were still thinking of appeals to pure reason when they ought to be thinking of nothing but an appeal to the God of battles. Mononia, who was fond of the boy, often admonished him not to be too rash, and once endeavoured to win him to moderation by pointing out to him that he was an English boy, and was not called upon to risk his liberty or his life in Ireland's quarrels.

"I am not a boy any longer," he indignantly exclaimed. "I am a young man,— a young man, Mononia; and I wish you would not call me a boy."

Mononia apologised for her error, and promptly corrected her form of speech, but went on to urge that, as a young Englishman or an Englishman, leaving the question of youth out of the controversy, he was not called upon to sacrifice himself in Ireland's cause. Thereupon Willie asserted the principle of the brotherhood of peoples, declared that all true men were of the

same kindred where a just cause was concerned, and that the terms "Englishman" and "Irishman" had no real meaning. Mononia gave up the argument, partly because she was not able at once to bring her mind to a thorough mastery of the novel doctrine thus proclaimed, and partly because she greatly admired the young fellow's pluck, and hoped that no crisis might ever arise which could involve him in danger.

Achille Dubois, too, was an ardent sympathiser with the movement, and only found fault with it because it did not go half far enough. Nothing would have quite contented him but an agitation for the levelling of thrones and altars in general; and, when opportunity allowed him, he sang song after song of Béranger's proclaiming war against monarchs and clergy, privileged orders, court decorations, police spies, and many other such objects of worship to an outworn society. Captain Daniel Carey regarded the whole movement with good-humoured contempt, and disposed of every argument which might be raised in its favour by asking whether anybody could expect him to believe that a pack of silly school-boys was likely to frighten the Lord Lieutenant out of Dublin Castle or to intimidate the warships in the southern harbour into the hauling down of their flags. As he found nobody ready to maintain that such feats were likely to be accomplished by a pack of silly school-boys, the genial Carey concluded that there was nothing more to be said, and that he had entirely knocked the bottom out of the case for Young Ireland. The old-established debating society had, as might have been expected, gone in for loyalty to existing institutions; while the younger one was becoming more and more ardently patriotic with every debate, and was arraigning night after night, with increasing passion of eloquence, the government of Britain under the name of Philip of Macedon, and glorifying the

Irish national leaders by the praise of the Gracchi and of the earlier and later Brutus. It may perhaps be added that Kathleen Fitzwilliam had lately been a constant listener at the meetings of the younger society.

The late spring was turning fast into an early summer, and the woods around that part of the harbour where Mr. Fitzwilliam had his country home were becoming more gloriously green with every day. Maurice had been for some time a regular and recognised visitor at the country home, and life was to him a season of intense happiness. The rush of the political movement all around him gladdened his youthful ardour and gave a new purpose to his existence, while the companionship of Kathleen filled his heart with an ever-growing sense of happiness. Never before had he known the fulness of that joy in living which is the highest rapture known to mortals, the season when we know that we are happy, and do not either look forward or backward, depend neither on the unreal and tantalising pleasures of hope nor on the melancholy pleasures of memory, but live only in and for the present, and feel no doubt but that to-morrow will be just the same as to-day. Many a mortal, even amongst those most troubled by the wear and tear of passing life, can look back upon a time when he was perfectly happy, and yet has to admit to himself that at the time he never realised how entirely happy he was. Maurice now felt that rarest of all delights: he knew he was happy, and could form no higher wish than for each succeeding day to be like the day that had gone before it. So far as he could judge, the love of Kathleen was absolutely his; and, indeed, the words "so far as he could judge" express a sort of qualification which found no existence in his mind or his heart. He never paused to form a judgment on the subject. He assumed, as one of the conditions of his existence, that Kathleen's love was as much given to him as his was to her.

There were always some visitors staying at Mr. Fitzwilliam's place; and there were frequent sails in his yacht all around the harbour and far on the open sea outside it, and there were delightful little moonlight excursions on soft fine nights in one or other of Mr. Fitzwilliam's rowing boats. Mr. Fitzwilliam was a hospitable man, who liked to have visitors in his seaside home and was pleased to make them as happy as he could. He was delighted to find that his daughter's charms of face and figure, of voice and manner, won for her numbers of admirers. There were hardly any neighbours in the place except for the two or three owners of large estates with noble ancient residences and the poorer dwellers and workers in the little village, who lived mainly by letting fishing and by letting lodgings when the finer seasons of the year brought lodgers from the city. Mrs. Fitzwilliam was in delicate health, and was one of the women who seem to make delicate health the main condition and indeed the principal delight of their existence. She never took any trouble about her domestic affairs, and left the management of her household in town and country to the care of a housekeeper, who thoroughly understood that she was never to trouble her mistress for orders or instructions of any kind, and that, if she felt that she had occasion to consult anybody, she must consult either Mr. Fitzwilliam himself or his daughter Kathleen. Mrs. Fitzwilliam was therefore somewhat like the unseen sovereign of a Japanese state in the days before Japan had taken to imitating the manners and customs of the West; and Kathleen was, for the most part, the visible and ruling potentate. Therefore, Kathleen arranged her life to suit her own inclinations, and was, indeed, as charming a little despot as could be met with anywhere out of the realms of fable.

Some of the neighbours, rich and poor, did occasionally

make comments to themselves on the undisguised companionship that was seen to exist between Kathleen and Maurice Desmond; but no whisper of such gossip ever reached Mrs. Fitzwilliam's ears, and she was too much absorbed in the daily condition of her own health to trouble herself about anything that might be going on outside the range of her immediate observation, or to worry herself with unnecessary conjectures or idle speculations as to anything which did not concern her own personal comfort. Mr. Fitzwilliam, of course, could not help seeing that his daughter and Maurice Desmond were very much together and that they seemed to find great satisfaction in the companionship; but he regarded Maurice as altogether too young and too poor to be thought of, even for a moment, as a serious aspirant to a marriage with Miss Fitzwilliam. It never came into his mind to imagine that Kathleen could think of falling in love with a boy of that age, especially when the boy was well known not to have a penny in the world and to have no prospects whatever of being able to make a living which could tempt any well-brought-up young woman, the daughter of wealthy parents, to become his wife.

Mr. Fitzwilliam had settled it satisfactorily in his own mind that Kathleen would make a marriage with some young man of good family or of large fortune or of both family and fortune. He had already formed some ideas about a likely husband for his daughter, and there were three or four young men at least, about whom he was not quite certain as to which would be the more desirable suitor. The political alarms which were disturbing the neighbourhood would have only made him feel the more secure as regards his domestic arrangements if he had contemplated the political movements in such a light; for he would have set it down as utterly impossible that his daughter could have any serious

iews about a young fellow who was already beginning o be talked of as a Young Irelander and little short of a downright rebel. Mr. Fitzwilliam was an unqualified supporter of all existing institutions, whatever they might be. It was an article of faith with him that these existing institutions, whether of Church or State, were the main support of the country's commerce and industry; and to him any efforts to make a change of any kind in those institutions was an evidence not merely of disloyalty, but also of vulgarity. He had observed, also, that some of the more aristocratic residents in the neighbourhood seemed to regard Maurice Desmond with good will and even with favour; for the mystical or mythical root of the house of Desmond had a certain influence even on these great personages, so long as Maurice was only an occasional visitor to the place, and any welcome given to him there did not pledge them to an acquaintanceship with him when they might happen to visit the city. For this reason they were inclined to be more gracious to Maurice, despite his acknowledged poverty, than even to Mr. Fitzwilliam himself, who, although he was known to be a rich man, was also known to have made his money in some sort of business, and was therefore more distinctly divided from the class who lived upon inherited revenue derived from landed estates.

Maurice and Kathleen, who were humourists in their way, had often noticed this and been amused by it, and made comments to each other about it; and the fair Kathleen was sometimes pleased, when her father happened to speak disparagingly of Maurice, to call his attention pointedly to the fact that Maurice occasionally received invitations to luncheon at some of the great neighbouring houses which, up to that time, had taken but slight notice of Mr. Fitzwilliam and his daughter. Kathleen reported her utterances of this kind to Maurice every

now and then, and they were both willing to make merry over the result of her observations; and Kathleen just now thought it a mere act of loyalty to their companionship to make as much of Maurice as she could, even at the risk of disparaging her father's position as a man of means who could endow his daughter with a fortune if she came up to his ideas as the right sort of marriage to make.

It may be mentioned, also, that Mr. Fitzwilliam was one of a class of Irishmen, rather common in that day, who were proud of being even more English than the English themselves. Mr. Fitzwilliam and his wife were both somewhat given to laying much stress on their frequent and prolonged visits to England, and were in the habit of observing that their English ways sometimes made it difficult for their humble neighbours in town and country to understand and appreciate the superiority of their social habits. This also amused Maurice and Kathleen not a little; and Kathleen occasionally had a perverse and capricious inclination to thwart these professions of English ways by unnecessarily informing her hearers that her people and she were thoroughly Irish by descent as well as by birth. It occasionally happened that some one of her hearers observed that the name Fitzwilliam did not sound thoroughly Irish, whereupon the wilful Kathleen was sure to reply: "Oh, but you don't understand. We belong to the Geraldines, you know, who came to settle in Ireland at the time of the Norman invasion, and were always described in history as more Irish than the Irish themselves."

All this highly delighted Maurice, and made him fonder than ever of his irrepressible Kathleen and more proud of her frank devotion to the companionship which was growing up between her and him. Their wanderings in the woods were as frequent and as long as ever; and, even when the house was full of guests and Kath-

leen was not able to spare him much time from her duties as hostess, she always found means to make him understand that he was not the same to her as any of the other guests, and that it was by no fault of hers that she could not always walk with him in the woods, or become his sole companion in one of the boats, or sing to him alone. When she did sing of evenings, she sang the songs which she knew he loved best; and, even when some other man stood by the piano and turned over the leaves of the music-book for her, she contrived every now and then to send a quiet stolen glance to Maurice which said as plainly as any words could have put it, "You see how bored I am, but I must be civil to these people; and you know how gladly I would sing to you alone if I only had the chance." Kathleen had a clear, sweet soprano voice, and, although she did not profess to be an accomplished musician, she sang with admirable expression and could give infinite force and humour to all manner of vivacious French ballads, as well as to passages from Italian opera; but she kept for Maurice's own ear the Irish songs which she loved best to sing and he loved best to hear. In short, Maurice's days and evenings were a dream of delight to him; and, as we have said before, he not only was happy, but he knew how happy he was.

Perhaps the climax of his happiness — for that season of his life, at least — was reached towards the close of a beautiful evening which he passed with the Fitzwilliams and two or three of their friends. There had been a small dinner party, and Maurice was one of the guests. The evening might not have seemed to open very auspiciously for Maurice, because Captain Jerningham was also one of the party. After dinner, however, the company sat in the drawing-room, the windows of which opened on to the lawn in front of the sea; and Kathleen sang some songs, accompanying herself on the piano.

One of these songs was a ballad taken from Gerald Griffin's novel, *The Collegians*, which had not in those distant days yet undergone the process of transformation or deformation into the popular drama, *The Colleen Bawn*. The song is called "A Place in thy Memory, Dearest"; and it is supposed to be the farewell of a lover who feels that he can no longer claim any hold on the affections of the woman he loves, because "a cloud on my pathway is glooming that never must break upon thine," and he believed that Heaven never made her to wither on his darkened road, and so he was content with a place in her memory. Kathleen had been singing several sprightly and rattling songs before this, and sang them with much natural humour of expression and even a somewhat heedless and saucy animation, which especially delighted Captain Jerningham, who was unusually eloquent in his words of approval. When she came to sing Griffin's ballad, her manner changed at once into a tender melancholy of tone which gave full and deep meaning to every line. Maurice sat listening in silent delight, and the words and the music sank deep into his heart. Captain Jerningham, no doubt, admired the song as he admired the singer; but his words of praise were somewhat conventional, and it might be inferred that the ballad had not quite gone home to his feelings. Kathleen rose from her seat, and shut the piano.

"There now," she said, "I have sung enough for this night; and I shan't give you any more music. How lovely the night is! We ought to be out upon the lawn and not wasting our time indoors."

Then she pointed her moral by opening the window and stepping out upon the grass, casting a glance at Maurice as she went which clearly invited him to follow her. Maurice was not slow to obey the call. Mrs. Fitzwilliam did not rise. To her the night air, even at such a season, only suggested colds and affections of

he chest. As she did not rise, her husband remained eated; and Captain Jerningham, after a moment of iesitation, remained for the time where he was.

"Come round this way," said Kathleen to Maurice, when she saw him at her side, "and I will show you where we can get the best view at this hour of the evening."

Maurice knew the spot very well. It was only a few yards away, at the side of the house; and it looked across a small bight, or little bay, opening out of the great harbour, and to some woods on the other side, above which the moon was just setting. The night was soft, and the air was warm and almost summerlike; and there was a witchery in the whole scene and atmosphere.

"I love that song," Maurice said. "I have never heard any one sing it but you, and I shall always associate it with you."

"I am very fond of it," Kathleen responded, "but I don't quite know why. I should never have cared for a lover like that. I can't imagine how any woman could put up with a man who told her so composedly that there was really nothing very absorbing about his love, and that they had better both go their different ways and not make too much of a work over their prudent separation."

"But come now," Maurice argued earnestly, "you really cannot read the song that way; and I am quite sure that never was the meaning you put into it when you sang it to-night or when you sang it to me before."

"I don't see what other meaning you can possibly put into it," declared the perverse Kathleen. "He tells her quite calmly that there is no use in his troubling himself about her or her troubling herself about him, and that they had better, like sensible persons, make

up their minds to go their own different ways and be happy."

"But you know that is not the meaning of the song. The lover is thinking only of her, and not of himself. He knows there is trouble coming for him, and he does not want to drag her into it; and he is only trying to make the best of it for her sake, and not to let her know that his heart is breaking all the time that he is trying to comfort her."

"I don't think he quite knew what women are like. If I cared about a man, and he had to go down into the depths of the sea,— of that sea out there,— I should like him to ask me to go down into the depths with him; and so would every woman for whom it was worth a man's while to write a song."

Maurice looked eagerly into her eyes. She met his look with confidence. There was a moment's silence, and then he said with some hesitation:—

"I suppose the song answers peculiarly to my present mood, Kathleen. I feel that I am likely to get into trouble, and I don't want to bring any one else into it."

"If you really cared about a woman and she was worth the caring for, you would not look at things in that way. You would know that, whatever trouble was waiting for you, the woman would want to share it with you."

"This is brave and generous and sweet of you, Kathleen, and very like you. But let me make my meaning clear. I have nothing to offer you but my love and my vague, distant hopes for a possible future."

"I only want your love; and I can wait for the vague, distant possible or impossible future."

"But your people,— your father and your mother,— they have no sympathy with the cause to which I have given myself up; and they would look upon it as a crime in me if I were to try to entangle you in my hopeless

fortunes. They have other plans and schemes for you; and they would think me the most ungrateful of mortals if I were to repay their kindness and their hospitality by making love to their daughter, and persuading her to pledge herself to one who is little better than a pauper to-day, and may be an inmate of one of Her Majesty's prisons to-morrow."

"But you *have* made love to me, and I always thought you meant what you said."

"Yes, yes, of course I meant what I said; but the thing did not then seem impossible. At all events, the danger was not so great."

"And you think, I suppose," Kathleen said scornfully, "that I am not a sort of girl who is worthy to share the danger. I prefer you in your old mood, Maurice; and I believe it was your real self that spoke to me then. Come, let us have the truth out. Do you want to give me up?"

"You know I do not," Maurice declared passionately. "You know I love you far better than I do my own life. But I have sometimes thought it would be well for you to give me up. I have sometimes wanted to save you from the wreck which may be my destiny."

"Then you think," asked Kathleen, in an altered tone and with an assumed sprightliness of manner, "that the lover in the song was not a cold and calculating person, after all, and that he really loved the girl?"

"Yes, if I understand the song, he loved her as I love you, Kathleen."

Kathleen suddenly drew a little ring from her finger, and pressed it into his hand, saying, "Keep that for me; and if ever, from any prudential motive or for any other reason, you want our engagement to be at an end, give me back that ring."

"It shall be mine forever!" Maurice said fervently,

"Well, we must go back to the house," Kathleen

murmured, releasing her hand from his, which was sti holding it.

"But we must exchange rings, Kathleen. I hav but this one, and it is worthless; and there is not eve a romantic story attached to it. It was won in a raffl at a charitable bazaar. You could not possibly wear i for even your middle finger could not hold it; but yo will keep it as my gift, and in token of the pledge w have just made?"

Kathleen took the ring.

"I could not wear it in any case," she said; "for m father would see it, and would ask me how I came by i and there would have to be explanations, which woul be inconvenient just now. But I will keep it, Mauric for you, until — until"—

"Until I can put one on your finger in the face day. Must we go back to the house, Kathleen?"

"Yes, we must, or they will wonder where we are

"Tell me one thing first," Maurice said, and he to her hand in his once again,— "tell me why you rais that question about that song just now, and why y tried to mistranslate it, when your own voice as y sang it showed that you were filled with the very so of its meaning?"

Kathleen hesitated for a moment; and then she sa in a tone which seemed half mirthful and half sad:—

"Well, the whole truth is this. I had reason believe that danger is threatening you, and I wanted show you in some way or other that I was ready share the danger; and I could not think of any bett way to draw you out into your real self than to fi fault with the lover in that song, and to let you kn how little I could value any lover who would rather nounce the girl he professed to love than bring her in the danger which threatened him. That was my lit plot, Maurice; and now it is all revealed."

"Your little plot has made me the happiest man in the world. O Kathleen, I love you with all my heart and soul! But tell me, just before we go back, how you came to know that I was in any danger."

"Oh, because of something Captain Jerningham told me this evening before you came. He told me that orders had come from Dublin Castle which let him know that the government are determined to put down the national movement with the strong hand at once; and he said that some of you young fellows in the city would be sure to get into trouble if you did not change your tone. I knew you would not change your tone; and I set my heart on letting you know that any danger which threatens you threatens me, also, and that no danger shall separate you from me."

"Then Captain Jerningham has shown himself, intentionally or unintentionally, my very best friend," Maurice exclaimed gayly. "I thank him from my heart, although I don't suppose he meant it for my good."

"Well, I don't suppose he meant it for your good in just that sort of way," Kathleen said with a bright smile. "But it has come that way, Maurice, all the same. Now we really must go back."

It was indeed full time that they should go back; for just as they turned towards the house they found that Mr. Fitzwilliam and Captain Jerningham had come out upon the lawn, and were likely to disturb that company which proverbially consists of two, and is reduced to nothingness by three or more.

The most skilful reader of the human heart would have found it hard to decide, with whatever opportunity afforded him for the study, which was the happier for that night's pledge, Maurice Desmond or Kathleen Fitzwilliam. We already know the whole story of Maurice's happiness,—a happiness which was only crowned by that

evening's declaration, just as a monarch's title is substantially his already, and is merely ratified by the ceremony of his coronation. Maurice had long felt sure that Kathleen loved him, and the exchange of rings was but the ceremonial of his coronation.

Kathleen, however, had gained something more than even the love of Maurice from the events of that evening so memorable in their lives. She had long known that she was a girl with a lover. Now she knew that she was not merely a girl with a lover, but also a heroine and a patriot. When she made up her mind that she would not renounce Maurice's love, whatever domestic or other troubles the resolve might bring upon her, she felt that she had suddenly become transfigured into a very heroine of romance. The other day she was only a happy, spoiled, wilful girl, with a certain gift, no doubt, for the fascination of admirers, and with a genuine delight in conquering the admiration of men, whether young or elderly; but she now felt that she had suddenly become a sort of Joan of Arc. Only the other day she had regarded the national movement in Ireland with almost total indifference; and, if Maurice Desmond had not been in the way, she would probably have set it down as an absurd and rather vulgar sort of business, in which young women of good education and of good position, young women who could go to balls, who could sing and play to admiring listeners, and who had been in London and in Paris, could not be expected to take any manner of interest. She had not in the mean time made any study of the political question, and yet was now a devoted Irish patriot, consecrated to the national cause; and she saw herself already, in visions of wrapt self-admiration, the heroine of many a breathless moment of danger by her lover's side. She was already forming wild and rapturous plans for concealing her lover from arrest by hiding him in some mysterious place of safety, known to

her alone, and where she could visit him in stolen hours and keep him well supplied with food and with news of all that was going on in the outer world. There were passages in old romances and poems which told her how a heroine should behave under such conditions, and keep the man she loved from the grasp of his enemies until the hour should come for him to emerge from his place of concealment and show himself at the head of his patriotic hosts and march to battle against the foes of his country. There was an old ruined castle, not far away, which had still some rooms deep under the earth, once used as the prison-holds of captured enemies; and she had many a time thought that one of these rooms might well be used as a sheltering-place for her young hero until the propitious hour should sound when he might come forth and summon his followers around him, and march to the chosen field of battle. The one difficulty which she foresaw in the way of all these dear, delightful plans was the difficulty of inducing Maurice to put himself completely under her guardianship, and consent to be hidden while his friends and comrades were arrested above ground, until the right moment should arrive for him to come forth and do or die, or, if it must be so, to do and die. Even this last she felt she could have borne; for it might be the part of a true heroine to see her lover do and die in a great cause, and, if it might not be her happy fate to share his end, yet to live bravely on and cherish his memory to the close of her earthly existence. These thoughts filled her mind and sustained her with a sort of happiness, establishing her already as a true heroine of romance.

## CHAPTER XIII

### MR. DESMOND'S NEW LIFE

KATHLEEN, therefore, was one convert made t the national cause. Another convert, too, ha been made in a different way, and by impulse which might also be regarded, in their peculiar fashio as belonging to the heroic mood. This other conve was no less a person than Mr. Desmond himself. No Mr. Desmond had, up to this time, been in the habit regarding the patriotic movement as something not b longing to the practical business of life, somethin which could only have an interest for the young, th foolish, and the ignorant, and could hardly be taken in serious account by men who had studied the history the past, and were able to estimate the realities of th present. When the new turn of political affairs can to be discussed in Mr. Desmond's presence, as it use to be very often of late, Mr. Desmond put the whc thing away from him with a serene contempt. He w unable to understand, he declared, with the manner one who is settling the whole question, how a set young fellows could really believe themselves capab of overthrowing Her Majesty's forces on the battlefiel Mr. Desmond was all unconsciously a believer in th power of phrases; and, when he spoke of Her Majesty forces, he felt as if he were using a form of argume which had infinitely more strength in it than if he we merely to speak of, let us say, the cavalry and infanti in the neighbouring barracks. The young men arour him, therefore, soon got into the way of avoiding futi discussion on the subject while he was within hearing and for a time Mr. Desmond was under the happy deli sion that his arguments had been too strong even fc them, and that they had settled down to more sober cor

victions. But after a while he began to hear of great meetings being held in the city and in the surrounding country, and of thrilling speeches delivered by Philip Colston and even by Maurice Desmond, and of midnight drillings and marchings, and of determined efforts which the government were about to make to crush the whole movement and force the young men into submission. Then it began to dawn upon him that he was left out of the whole movement, and it suddenly occurred to him to ask himself what would become of historical fitness if a rising of Irish patriots against the Saxon were actually to take place and the head of the house of Desmond were not to be at the fore-front of the national enterprise. The bare thought of the head of the house of Desmond being thus left out in the cold was too much for him. He kept asking himself again and again whether it was possible for the head of the house of Desmond thus to fail, and his own self-invented phrase was too much for him. One day he utterly surprised and bewildered Mononia and Maurice by making the solemn announcement to them that, as the head of the house of Desmond, he was determined to put himself in the front of the movement, and that in pursuance of this resolve he had made up his mind to attend the next meeting at the hall of the Confederation in the city, and there proclaim his sentiments and assume his proper place.

Mononia and Maurice were positively aghast at this announcement. They could not see their father in such a part as that which he had just claimed for himself. They had not been allowed to follow the workings in his mind of the phrase about the head of the house of Desmond; and they knew that at all times, up to that very day, he had been utterly opposed to all ideas of rebellious movement, and had never showed the slightest sympathy even with the higher purposes of those who

had sanctioned such a project. He had always disparaged the leaders of the movement as hot-headed and ignorant persons, who had been merely swayed by a passion for imitation of the mob leaders in France and all over the European Continent. They had always known him as one who especially loved a life of ease and comfort and quiet culture, a life of dinner parties and after-dinner speeches, and of picnics in the woods and yachting excursions round the harbour; and they were unprepared to regard him as the leader of a patriotic host on the battlefield. The first thought that occurred to Mononia's loving and daughter-like mind was that her father was in a very delicate state of health, and that he would simply catch a heavy cold and become a hopeless invalid if he were exposed to one night of campaigning in the open air. Mononia was to her heart's core a lover of her country and a full believer in the rights of the national cause to which her sincere convictions had given her up. She had not studied political questions very deeply. Women in those days had not yet become students of political science. She had taken the political tone of those around her, with whom she was most naturally in sympathy; and she had read something of the history of her country. She was a believer in the doctrine of nationalities long before Louis Napoleon had set up that doctrine as a principle in statesmanship, and the Young Ireland movement had found a responsive note in her feelings. She had never regarded herself as a heroine in any sense of the word or had a moment's ambition to be thus regarded by others. But she loved her country sincerely, and would have made any sacrifice that could come in her way for the sake of its cause. It seemed to her quite natural and a matter of course that Maurice should take any risks in that cause; and, while she would have held him back, if she could, from needless and futile danger, it was not in her nature to

wish to keep him back from any sacrifices that might be necessary for the good of his country. In the same way she would have urged her father on to any risk where a genuine service to the cause was to be rendered, and her only sense of alarm just now came from the instinctive conviction that he was not the sort of man who could possibly lend a helping hand to the national movement. Therefore, his sudden proposal to proclaim himself a patriot brought with it only a sense of utter incongruity and a curious twinge of compassion.

Mr. Desmond, meanwhile, having made his announcement, did not wait for any words from his son and daughter, but turned and left the room at once. He felt, that, after such a proclamation as he had made, the most dignified and heroic part for him was to regard the matter as settled for the present and to wait no further question. When the head of the house of Desmond had spoken his decision, there was nothing more to be said which would not have marred the fine dramatic effect of the announcement. If Mr. Desmond had been accustomed to the language of the stage, he might have said to himself that another word would have spoilt the impressiveness of the descending curtain.

Maurice and Mononia looked at each other for a moment or two in silence. Perhaps the only one subject in the passing story of their lives concerning which there was not a full outspoken confidence between them was that supplied by the peculiarities of their father's temperament. Each must probably have known very well what was in the thoughts of the other; but to each it would have seemed little short of an act of sacrilege to put into words, even for the sole hearing of the other, a recognition of their father's incapacity to deal with the real business of life.

"This will never do," Maurice said at last.

"It will never do," Mononia echoed. "Father is

not strong enough to take part in affairs of this kind. It would be sacrificing himself for nothing. If he could do any good, that would be quite different, of course, and then I should not think of holding him back; but we must remember his age and his delicate health, and the kind of life he has been used to. I tremble at the thought of his getting himself mixed up in any serious political struggle, and all for no possible good to anybody."

"I never thought his heart was in it," Maurice exclaimed. "Why, only yesterday he was dead against the whole thing. I cannot imagine what has brought him round so soon. But what can we do, Mononia?"

"He will lose his office. He has made enemies enough already, and this will turn against him most of the friends who have upheld him so long. I should not care about that if it would do any good."

"Oh, as to that," Maurice declared, "I think, if he has made up his mind to present himself at the meeting at the Confederation Hall, and to stand on its platform, and proclaim himself an advocate of the movement, he ought to resign his office at once and of his own accord. You see, it is really a sort of government office; and it would never do for him to try to serve the two masters."

"He will not long get the chance, you may be sure," Mononia observed with a melancholy smile.

"Of course not, but he must show from the very first that he has no intention of trying to do such a piece of work. If I held a commission in the army, Mononia, and became filled with the convictions which I have at present, I would resign my commission before I joined the national cause. It is a question of honour, and I hope he will see it himself in that light as soon as he has time to think over the matter. Look here, Mononia, I wonder if it would do any good if I were to remind him how Silkon Thomas resigned his allegiance and laid

down his sword publicly before he turned away from the service of the sovereign whom he felt he could serve no longer. I think that might have some effect upon him."

Mononia started, and lowered her eyes uneasily. The words of her brother were evidence that he fully understood the love of artistic and dramatic effect which was part of her father's nature. She had recognised it herself this long time; but she had never spoken a word, even to Maurice, which could betray the recognition.

"I think," she said evasively, "that, if we put the whole case fairly before him, he will see what is right to do, even if he does not see it already. Perhaps he does see it, and has already made up his mind. The first question for us, Maurice, is whether we ought to endeavour to persuade him not to have anything to do with the political movement."

"I don't think we ought to do anything of the kind," Maurice said firmly. "I am afraid I don't quite know whether we are entitled in the heraldic sense to represent the historic claims of the house of Desmond; but, whether we are or not, it is quite certain that father is an Irishman, and that no son or daughter of his has any right to hold him back from a movement which strives for the restoration of Ireland's rights."

"I feel like that too, Maurice; and, although I can't help feeling sorry, in a weak and womanish way, that poor father should have so suddenly made up his mind to throw himself into a struggle for which he is so sadly unfitted, yet I do not think it is our part to hold him back, even if we could hold him back, from casting in his lot with the cause of his country."

"You are a brave girl, Mononia," Maurice exclaimed, and he threw his arm round her shoulder; "and there is one thing certain in my mind,—that the country can

never be lost which has girls like you ready to stand up and make sacrifices for her cause."

Then the sister and brother began to talk for a little over domestic affairs and some of the more hopeful prospects which seemed opening up for them. Mononia had got two or three additional pupils, and her work in that way seemed decidedly prospering. Maurice had got a regular engagement as a writer of articles for one of the local papers, and, although the pay would have looked but a small remuneration in the eyes of a young journalist of more modern days, yet it was regular pay, however small, and it seemed something quite substantial to Maurice and Mononia; and they made up their minds that there would be no difficulty about maintaining their father, for the present, by their combined exertions. Now, as they had never known a time when they could venture to look forward much beyond the present, the condition of things appeared as satisfactory as they had any reason to look for; and, at all events, it was quite certain that, while Mononia had the undisputed management of the household, there was no likelihood of their getting into debt or having to live upon the charity of their friends. It was a distinct source of comfort to both of them, although they did not openly comment on the fact even to each other, that Mr. Desmond would not be able to drift into his old ways of incurring expenditure without any consideration as to the means of repayment. With whatever troubles in the outer world, with whatever risks and dangers the state of political affairs might bring, there was to Mononia and her brother a sense of independence which neither had known before since they had grown out of the age when children entertain the fond belief that their parents have unlimited money to spend. Thus far their new life had brought with it an entirely new sense of happiness.

This talk took place one morning in their new home just before Mr. Desmond was setting out for his walk to the city to attend to the duties of his office. Mononia was about to visit her pupils, whom she taught in their own homes, having no accommodation for their daily instruction in her present house. Maurice was going into the city to look after his newspaper work. The new home was a small, cottage-built house, which bore at least so much resemblance to Desmond Lodge that it stood close to the river. It had been at one time two small cottages side by side; but the two had been taken some years before by an owner of comparatively independent means, and he had, by the removal of the dividing walls, converted the two huts, as they might almost be called, into one tolerably comfortable dwelling. It had a roof of thatch, and six rooms besides a kitchen.

Three of the rooms overhead were bedrooms; and on the ground floor there were three sitting-rooms, one of which was assigned as a sleeping-chamber to Mr. Desmond, another was used for the breakfasts and dinners of the family, and the third was the sitting-room, on the quiet adornment of which Mononia and Maurice had spent much time, thought, taste, and ingenuity. Some of Mr. Desmond's most favourite books were arranged in his bedroom, some others occupied shelves in the dining-room, and in the sitting-room were collected such books and pictures as Mononia and Maurice wished especially to have always about them. There, too, stood Mononia's harp; and there on a side table was Mr. Conrad's much-prized gift, the model of the Parthenon, covered with its glass case.

Every day Mononia was doing something to give additional ornament to these rooms, if only with fresh-gathered flowers. Mononia and Maurice had fitted up their bedrooms each with a little table and desk; and Maurice did much of his literary work in his own room,

and Mononia prepared and studied her lessons in hers. The boat was looked after by Murtagh Ryan, and Mrs. Ryan took infinite pains to keep the interior of the house in good order. Murtagh Ryan always waited at the dinner table, and acted as the family messenger on all occasions and sorts of errands to the city and to the neighbourhood generally. Decidedly, it was the abode of poverty, but of a poverty which was allowed to have in it nothing mean or squalid; and it looked in its poorest details like a home which people of education and of good taste need not be ashamed to occupy. Certainly, none of the friends of Mononia and Maurice appeared to think the home unsuited for the reception of visitors; and the brother and sister found no occasion to apply to their own state the melancholy old saying that poverty parts good company.

Mr. Desmond made the new condition of things as comfortable for himself as well might be. Seeing that he could no longer give dinner parties, he consoled himself by dining out almost every day of his life. He had friends enough in the neighbourhood and in the city who were still quite ready to receive him as a guest; and he took it for granted that a boy and girl like Maurice and Mononia never troubled themselves much on the subject of dinner, and would not know how to value a really good dinner even if it were set before them. There was nothing, therefore, to force on Mr. Desmond any suggestion that he had ceased to be the head of the house of Desmond. He was somewhat disappointed, to be sure, by the fact that the great surprise which he once fondly believed Mononia to have in store for him had not yet come upon him as a reality. But he dined very often with Mr. Woodward; and Woodward was a frequent visitor to the riverside cottage, and did not seem to have fallen off in any of his attentions to the Desmond family. Mr. Desmond, being always of a hopeful and childlike

ature, took it for granted that things must come right n the end; and he thought it would be unworthy of his osition as a gentleman to seek any hinted information ither from Woodward or from Mononia on so delicate a subject. He prided himself especially on his conduct towards his daughter, and looked forward with cheerful expectancy to the time when he should have the happiness of reminding Mononia that he had never put the slightest pressure on her in support of Mr. Woodward's offer of marriage, and had never, even by the most indirect form of question, invited her to anticipate the gladsome announcement which, he still believed, she would one day have to make in the confidence of the family circle.

Mr. Desmond pursued the new course along which his sudden inspiration had directed him. As he had made up his mind to attend the meeting in the Confederation Hall, he yielded easily to the advice of his son and daughter; and he preceded his first appearance on a public platform by addressing a letter to his superiors in office, announcing his resignation of his place as a hireling of established authority. The letter, it may be said, gave much relief to those superiors in office, because they had long been looking out for some opportunity of getting rid of him without exposing themselves to the imputation of undue harshness in the case of a man who was supposed to have some consideration in the eyes of his fellow-citizens. The announcement also gave great satisfaction to those who attended the meeting in the Confederation Hall, and procured for Mr. Desmond an enthusiastic greeting when he came forward on the platform to deliver his speech. Few men are so fortunate as to have the opportunity of performing an act which gives complete satisfaction to the representatives of both sides in a great political controversy. Mr. Desmond was, in this instance, one of those rarely privi-

leged mortals. His speech in the Confederation Hall was received with much applause, most of which, however, was a tribute rather to the patriot's self-sacrifice than to the eloquence of the man. The speech had, in fact, what would have been called, in the language of more modern criticism, a *succès d'estime.* A young orator who followed Mr. Desmond declared that the speech contained some of the finest passages to which he had ever listened; but the young orator, when privately taken to task by some carping critics for the too great liberality of his praise, declared that he stood by every word of it, but that the passages which he had in his mind when offering his tribute of eulogy were the quotations from Byron, Walter Scott, Thomas Moore, and Horace. Mr. Desmond went home after the meeting a proud and happy man.

The head of the house of Desmond took very kindly to the new life which was now opening out upon him. Like that countryman of his whose praise is sung in certain verses by Charles Lever, he had never a genius for work. It was, moreover, never his way to look far beyond the passing hour or moment; and, as long as the cottage was maintained somehow or other during the current week, he did not trouble himself with any thought as to the possibilities of the week after next. He busied himself a good deal in the garden every day, and was proud to be able to show his daughter what he had been doing with plants and beds and borders. Likewise he discovered that the clock in the dining-room and the clock in the kitchen sadly wanted looking after, and he set them chiming and striking for hours together in the full faith that he was putting them to rights. Mononia and Mrs. Ryan both humoured him as well as they could, although Mrs. Ryan did observe in private to her husband that she wished "the masther would keep himself to looking afther the garden, and

ıld lave the poor ould kitchen clock alone, for it ; bad enough already without him." Mr. Desmond's ı secret conviction was that his retirement bore a lking resemblance to that of Cincinnatus and also to .t of Charles V.

## CHAPTER XIV

### "BRIGHT WE'VE SEEN IT BURNING"

IT is easy and natural, for any one who looks back from this distance of time to the Irish national movement of 1848, to see how utterly hopeless it was of any direct and immediate success. The wonder that any student of history in our days must feel is that any rational human beings could have thought that such a movement had any chance of success. But there is a good deal to be said on that subject, which was present to the minds of educated and intelligent men who actually took part in the movement, and is not likely to be borne in mind by most of those who study it as a mere chapter of ancient history. In the first place, the leaders of the Young Ireland movement are not to be credited with the fond belief that the young nationalists of the country, rising in rebellion, could possibly hold their own for so long against the troops and the arms of the British government. The hope of many men engaged in the movement was that, if Ireland could but hold out for a certain time, some foreign state or foreign states might come to her help,—some great Continental war might break out, during which another landing upon Irish shores might be made to deal a heavy blow to England. The time was one of international convulsion: most of the thrones of Continental Western Europe appeared to be threatened; and it seemed reasonable enough to believe that, if Ireland could only make herself known as a country in rebellion, her claim to national independence might have to be taken into account when the final settlement came to be made. Then, again, it has to be said that firearms of precision had not yet become weapons of warfare, and that the Birmingham rifles, which the Young Irelanders were laying

up for future use, were weapons of just the same sort as those possessed by the regular army. These are conditions which it is only fair to take into account when at this distance of time we are considering, not indeed the possible chances which the Young Ireland movement might have had, but the reasons which then induced many intelligent men to believe that the attempt was at least worth a trial.

Then it has to be said that the Young Ireland movement was essentially educational in its effect upon the country. It began, indeed, as an educational movement, and was led or drawn by the conditions and events of the time to identify itself with political agitation, and at last to associate itself with an attempt at armed rebellion. But, from first to last, its one great object was to spread education among the youth of Ireland. "Ireland's trance," said one of the poets of the day, "was ignorance, and knowledge all the spell has broken." The effort was to teach, not only the history of Ireland and Ireland's literature, but to spread the knowledge of history and literature generally. This was one secret of the fascination which the movement exercised over the young men of Ireland of that day. The leading articles and the poems in the national newspapers and magazines abounded in allusions which could only be appreciated by those who had something like a liberal education; and ardent young men read books and books, if only that they might be better able to find themselves in touch with those who were eager for their instruction. Some of the leaders of the movement wrote prose and verse which would have won literary fame in any country, and would assuredly have found thorough appreciation in England if the prose and verse had not been devoted to what English public opinion too often regarded as a merely hostile cause. Among the adversaries which the Young Ireland movement set it-

self to overthrow were the misrepresentations of Irish character and of Irish feeling set up and made popular, in many instances, by Irishmen of an older school. The young men of the newer school resented the idea that Ireland should be represented by the comic Irishman of the novel and of the stage. It is impossible to deny that the Young Ireland agitation was inspired by high and generous thought, and by a genuine love for all that was great in history, in literature, and in art.

The movement, however, it is needless to say, was not thus regarded by the authorities in Dublin Castle; and, indeed, the spirit of revolution abroad throughout Europe was not likely to foster in the official mind that philosophical temperament which can recognise possible good to come out of any influence that threatens to disturb the existing order of things. The air was thick with rumours of severe measures of repression to be directed against the leading nationalists and of arrests to be made wholesale in order to strike terror into every town and village. An act of Parliament was rapidly passed, which converted spoken or written sedition into felony,— in other words, made any one who delivered a speech or published a newspaper article which might be construed as inciting to rebellion liable to the punishment which, up to that time, could only have been inflicted on a prisoner found guilty of felony,— in other words, to a long term of imprisonment or of transportation; for the transport system was still in full force as a means of dealing with offenders against the law. These few words of explanation are necessary in order that the reader of to-day may clearly understand the risk which a young man was incurring in 1848 who allowed himself to be too eloquent with tongue or paper about the tyranny of the Saxon and the patriotic duty of resisting his rule and driving him into the sea.

The Desmond family and their immediate friends

njoyed, nevertheless, some days which still might be alled happy. We were all very young in those days; nd with early summer weather and a lovely river soon losing itself in the sea, and a green country spreading all around, ornamented here and there by the ruins of castles and abbeys, it was easy for young men and women to snatch some happiness from the passing hours, no matter what dangers might be foreshadowed in the future by stern proclamations from the seat of government. One evening there was a boating excursion down the river in which Maurice and Mononia Desmond took part. There were three boats, and each boat held its company of six. Maurice Desmond, Philip Colston, Achille Dubois, Willie Woodward, Mononia Desmond, and Kathleen Fitzwilliam were in the first of the boats; and the others were filled by some of their friends. The young men did the rowing; and the girls sat in the stern, and one of them steered. The excursion had no definite project about it. The idea was to row up and down the river as long as the company felt inclined, or, at all events, until the ladies of the party thought it was growing too late and that the time had come to return home. When some peculiarly beautiful part of the river had been reached, some spot where the stream was narrow and the trees on either side almost made an archway over the water, it was the delight of the young men and maidens to ship the oars and float with the river's course, and sing ballads in the starlight. The air was deliciously soft and mild, and the whole atmosphere seemed as if it were steeped in poetry and romance. On some parts of the river the joyous company could catch no glimpse of the lights from the not distant city or even from the windows of the villas scattered here and there along the banks; and the boats seemed for the moment as completely sheltered from all signs of civilization as if they were the canoes of the Indian on the

Huron, or the Mohawk River, in the days before ] more Cooper.

There was a curious feeling of exaltation, or one n almost say of exultation, in the breasts of some of t who sat in the first boat that evening. The leade the movement in Dublin had decided upon sending s accredited emissaries to France, in the first inst and afterwards, perhaps, to other parts of the Conti for the purpose of conferring with the chiefs of the lutionary party about the assistance which a risin Ireland might obtain from those who professed to at heart the cause of all oppressed nationalities. eloquence, the energy, and the patriotic devotio Philip Colston had obtained recognition from the lea men among the Young Ireland party in the Irish tal, and Philip had been invited to become one of delegates. The service, of course, was dangerous; could hardly be regarded as other than treasonable cording to English law, especially according to En law as it prevailed in Ireland after what was called Treason Felony Act. It might well mean that t who undertook the commission could never retur their native land unless they were to return in ranks of a foreign invading army. Philip Colston, ever, gladly accepted the invitation to become on the delegates; and his comrades were very proud o choice, and felt it an honour to the city that he sh have been esteemed worthy of such a service.

Mononia's heart was torn with conflicting emoti but the uppermost and mastering emotion was a fe of pride that her lover should have been invited to s in such a fate or task, and that even his love for and his reluctance to leave her should not have i fered for a moment with his resolve to undertake perilous duty. She felt as some Greek girl might l felt in classic days, when the man she loved had l

chosen as one of the defenders of his country at Marathon or at Salamis; and, indeed, there was much that resembled the heroic Greek spirit in the young men and women of those days of 1848. Every one of the boat's company seemed to feel that this evening on the river would be the last, for some time to come, when the same friends could gather together to spend such a gladsome evening, even if the chances of the future should so arrange themselves as to allow that party of friends to gather together in the same way ever again. The excitement of the occasion stirred up every heart; and a temper prevailed which seemed resolute to bid defiance to fate, and to give up the passing moments to something like a festive celebration. Many songs were sung, and the air seemed illuminated by flashes of wild high spirits. Achille Dubois rattled out some of Béranger's most enthusiastic proclamations of defiance to despotism and loyalty to the spirit of freedom. Much scorn was spoken now and then of the new law to silence the voice of the nation, and Maurice Desmond drew a whimsical comparison between the lives and characters of some of those who would have to sit in judgment and some of those who would, in all probability, have to sit in the felon's dock. These words gave a hint to Kathleen Fitzwilliam; for she broke out into song, and sang with her sauciest humour and in her most thrilling tones that ballad from *The Beggar's Opera* which bears the name of Tyburn Tree. *The Beggar's Opera* still held the stage, and people still understood its allusions and its humours. The ballad declares that "since laws were made for every degree," to curb wrong-doing wherever it might occur, it was indeed "a wonder we have not more company on Tyburn Tree." But it goes on with sarcastic bitterness to declare that, if the laws in certain countries were thus administered, it would "thin the land such numbers to string upon Tyburn Tree."

Every one in the boat thoroughly understood the application which the saucy maiden intended to give to the reckless outburst from Captain Macheath. Every one gave it some special appropriateness. There was this or that judge who had risen to his high position by abandoning his early principles, by fawning on every government in power, by perverting justice, wherever he could, to the purposes of those from whom he hoped for advancement, by selling his soul to the highest official bidder; and every one thought that before such a man, in his now official capacity, would come up for trial some of the noblest and purest patriots then honoured in Ireland. Perhaps to some of the company, also, there came up the picture of this or that leading lawyer who had not yet obtained a place on the bench, but who was ready to do any service desired by Dublin Castle in the hope that he might attain to it, and who might before long have the opportunity of sending better men than himself to the local institution which represented Tyburn Tree. The little company were fairly delighted with the song, with the manner, and, still more, the purpose of the singer; and Kathleen had to sing the ballad three times over — a task which she performed without any reluctance whatever — before she was allowed to subside into silence. Then Willie Woodward favoured the company with a song by one of the poets who were beginning to be popular among the English Chartists; and at last Mononia was called upon to contribute her share towards the musical entertainment. Mononia had not been listening very attentively to Willie Woodward's song. The evening excursion was drawing to a close, and her mind was occupied with the thought that she must soon have to say farewell to Philip Colston for no one could tell what length of time,—that vague dangers were threatening him and threatening their love; that she might per

haps never see him again; and at the same time that he was about to start on an enterprise which she felt sure must bring him honour, which might win him fame, which might enable him to do splendid service for his country, and to which she herself had urged him on with all the energy and the self-devotion of her nature. She was roused from such reflections by the urgent appeal to her to give the company a song; and without a moment's hesitation she followed the impulse of her thoughts, and began Thomas Moore's ballad, "Go where Glory waits thee!"

She gave the full strength and volume of her voice to the opening line,—the line from which the song takes its name, "Go where glory waits thee!" so that it rang out like an encouragement, an incitement, a command, to some venturous enterprise which must be followed by fame. Then, after a moment's pause, she sang the second and third line in a tone of tender, reminding appeal,—

"But, while fame elates thee,
Oh, still remember me!"

The last word was so sweet and low in its tenderness that it seemed to sink almost into silence. While she was singing the second verse, full as it was of delightful memories claiming their hold over the departing hero to whom they were supposed to speak, the boat was drifting into a part of the river where the trees were less thick; and in the soft evening sky was seen distinctly the disk of the Shepherd's Star, and the light of the planet gave a new meaning to the appeal:—

"When at eve thou rovest
By the star thou lovest,
Oh, then remember me!"

"Think, when home returning,
Bright we've seen it burning;
Oh, thus remember me!"

As Mononia sang these lines, surcharged with meaning to one at least of the company, she felt Philip's hand laid for a moment on her own, and then gently withdrawn. She was almost on the point of breaking down; but she rallied, and recovered her self-control, and she sang the song to its close. In the silence which followed for a moment the thought rushed into her mind that she must have betrayed herself to that boat's company, that she might as well have openly declared her love for Philip as have sung that song under such conditions and on that evening. Mononia cared but little if on that evening, which seemed to be one of parting from her lover, she had been betrayed by her feelings and by the occasion into an open confession of her love. It mattered little now to her or to him, and none of those who listened to her song would think the worse of her for her confession.

Mononia was herself the first to break the silence.

"It is getting late," she said, "and we must go home."

Other songs were sung upon the homeward way; but neither Mononia nor Philip paid much attention to them, and, when the boat reached the garden of the Desmond's cottage, the attention of all the company was soon drawn away by some startling news which awaited them. They found Mr. Desmond and Mr. Woodward in the garden, and Woodward had brought the news from the city. The authorities in the capital had taken stern action, and had arrested one of the most prominent and certainly the most influential among the leaders of the Young Ireland movement, and were about to put him on his trial under the new act on a charge which did not allow of his being admitted to bail, and, if proved against him, would leave him open to a convict's doom of, it might be, lifelong transportation.

The common belief everywhere was that a great many other arrests would be made at once all over the country, and that the hour had come when the government were determined either to force on a rebellion or to compel an absolute submission. Mr. Woodward declared his conviction that the main object of the government was to test the strength of the national movement, in the full belief and hope that some sudden, ill-prepared attempt thus made would be crushed with terrible severity, or else, if no such attempt were made, it would be taken as conclusive evidence that there was no real heart whatever in the national movement, and that a few timely sentences of transportation would relieve the authorities of all further trouble at the hands of those who professed to represent the national manhood of Ireland. The whole company gathered together on the little garden above the river, and talked excitedly over the arrest and its possible consequences. Mr. Desmond rose to the full height of the occasion.

"This is the government's challenge to the nation," he proudly declared; "and, if the challenge is not taken up, then we are branded as do-nothings and faint-hearted cowards."

"But you're not ready," Mr. Woodward pointed out. "The fact is, you all talked too much and talked too soon; and you only gave the government warning of what they had to expect, if they allowed you to go on long enough. Look here. I hate this government of aristocracy and privilege just as much as any of you Irish fellows can do; but take my word for it, you have been unconsciously playing into their hands all this time. I tell you what, I don't think it's half a bad stroke of policy on the part of the government to come down upon you in this way just when you least expected it, and to send all your best men out of the way and across the seas. Well, I can only say that, if you let them do this thing

without raising a hand to prevent it, Ireland may go whistle for her national independence. I never was an advocate of rebellion myself, although I may admit that there is an excuse for it; but, if you don't mean rebellion, you had better not talk about it."

"I agree with Mr. Woodward thus far," exclaimed Philip, "that the challenge has been deliberately thrown down, and that, if we don't take it up, we had better sit quietly down and put up with whatever is dealt out to us for at least another generation."

"One thing I am glad of at all events," Woodward said; "and that is that you, my dear Philip, can be out of the trouble with honour to yourself, and, I hope, with ultimate advantage to the country."

"I don't see it," replied Philip, gravely.

"Nor I," said Maurice, scornfully.

"Nor I," echoed Mononia, sadly, and yet with a tone of triumph in her voice.

"Why, look here," Mr. Woodward explained, and he turned toward the little gathering as if he were addressing a meeting. "Are you not a delegate appointed to go over to France, and see what can be done there to get the new republic to lend a helping hand to your country? It is your duty to go; and, the sooner you go, the better. If I were you, I'd leave Ireland this very night, and get safely to France. Come along with me, and we'll go into the city at once and charter a vessel; and you'll be out of sight of the Irish coast before many hours are past. I'll find money enough to prevail on the captain of some steamer or some good stout sailing craft to take charge of you, and land you safely in some French port before you know where you are. Then you will be out of the present trouble here, and you may be able to render some service to Ireland which you never could do if you remained upon your native soil and got arrested and thrown into prison. Come, isn't that good sense?"

For a moment a ray of hope lit up in Mononia's mind, as it did also in the minds of some others who were listening to Woodward's earnest advice. But the hope died in Mononia's breast even before she heard Philip's quiet and resolute reply.

"I cannot leave Ireland now. I cannot go out of the country at such a crisis as this. I hope and believe that Ireland will take up the challenge which the English government has flung down; and, while there is any chance of such a thing being done, it is the plain duty of every true Irishman to abide with the fortunes of his country to the last."

There was more talk on the subject, but Philip remained firm to his purpose. Nothing short of a positive order, he said, from his leaders in Dublin should induce him to leave the country on any mere diplomatic expedition, as it might be called, when there was an imminent chance of a rising in which every Irishman who had openly encouraged a policy of resistance was bound to take a part.

"Don't you feel with me, Maurice?" he said.

"I only wish I had been appointed one of the delegates to France," Maurice replied with resolute calmness of tone, "in order that I might better prove my absolute agreement with your opinion, Phil, that, after the turn events have taken, my place is here on Irish soil, to live or die with my comrades and brothers in the Irish cause."

The talk was interrupted here by the appearance of the faithful Murtagh Ryan in the garden. Ryan announced, with a becoming dignity of manner, that Miss Fitzwilliam's carriage was waiting for her.

"Then let it not wait any longer," said Miss Fitzwilliam, promptly and decidedly. "Tell the coachman to take the carriage home at once. I have not had a walk late in the evening for I don't know how long, and

I do not intend to miss my chance this night. I c
say somebody will see me home," she said, and loo
inquiringly round the group in the garden until her e
rested on Maurice.

"I shall be only too glad to be your escort," t
gallant and self-sacrificing youth declared.

Then the talk on the political outlook went on
before; but as Philip held firmly to his resolve, and
the majority of the company were decidedly with h
Mr. Woodward did not press his advice about the cl
tering of the vessel and the escape to France. Aft
while Kathleen announced her wish to return home,
declined to remain any longer, although it was not
very late. Perhaps some others of the company gues
as well as Maurice did, that Miss Fitzwilliam prefer
to leave before the general breaking up took place
order that she and her escort might have the walk
to themselves.

In those days, when a gentleman escorted a l
home, the lady always leaned upon the gentlem
arm. There were only ladies and gentlemen in th
days. The rude habit of describing respectable pers
as men and women had not yet come into fashion,
would then have been regarded as inconsistent w
good manners. So, when the leave-takings had been
through, and Maurice and Kathleen were on the o
road, Kathleen leant heavily on the young man's a
The road was a gentle descent towards the city,
lights of which could be seen sparkling below in
distance. Maurice and Kathleen did not seem in
great haste to get to the city. They walked slowly;
the pace seemed to grow slower and slower as t
shortened the distance between them and Kathle
city home, where she was staying for a few days.

"I wonder if you will think it strange of me," K
leen said; "but I must tell you, until Mr. Woodw

came with his news to-night, I was envious of dear Mononia."

"Why envious of Mononia, dearest?" Maurice asked with a pressure of her arm. "You seem to me to be twin sisters in your fortunes, risking the same dangers and ready to make the same sacrifices."

"Yes, so we are; but I kept envying her because her lover had been chosen for this expedition to France, which might be a great and brilliant enterprise, while my lover was left at home."

"You are just the girl to fill a man with courage, Kathleen, if the man wanted it, and if you could care for any one who did want it. If I could be more proud of you than I have been this long time, I should be the more proud of you because you have felt like that. But, dearest, the staying at home is now more dangerous than the going abroad."

"Yes, and that contents me; and that is why I am envious of Mononia no longer. My Maurice shares the common danger, and will be in the front of it, I know. I only wish I could be in the front of it as well, but we poor girls can only sit at home and shed tears, and say prayers if we are at all devout; but I am afraid mine is not a temper much given to devotion."

"Come what will," Maurice said fervently, "I shall always know that you are thinking of me; and I shall feel encouraged by the thought; and it will be a new motive inspiring me to do my best, whatever may come. You girls can do much more, Kathleen, than you think to convert commonplace young fellows into heroes."

"You are my hero," Kathleen murmured; "and all my faith and all my hopes go with you. I love your Irish cause because it is yours, Maurice. I never knew or cared anything about it until I met you; but it is mine now, because you are mine, and I love you so much that I could not even try to keep you back from

the danger you may have to run. I, too, Maurice, could sing with Mononia 'Go where glory waits thee,' and I know I need not bid you to remember me. How touchingly Mononia sang that song! I saw how her eyes turned on Philip when she sang of the evening star, and how, 'when home returning, bright we've seen it burning.' Look, Maurice, there is the star!"

The lovers stopped for a moment in their walk. The place was lonely and silent. Yet a few more steps would bring them near to the streets now lighted by the city lamps. They paused for a while on the descending pathway, and looked into the pale blue sky of early summer. The star was shining almost alone in that region of the heavens.

"We shall remember this evening," said Maurice.

"And this spot," murmured Kathleen.

Then for one moment the lips of the lovers met, and the next moment they had resumed their walk. They talked earnestly in low tones about the manner in which Maurice was to contrive to give Kathleen the earliest news of everything that might happen for the next few days; and they devised and discussed various plans and schemes for as many meetings as possible during whatever time might still be left for lovers to meet before the hand of fate should come in, and, in the words of Jean Paul Richter, "seize their two bleeding hearts and fling them different ways."

Thus they found their way at last into the city, and Maurice conducted Kathleen to her home. As he left her at her hall door, not one word of farewell was spoken between them. When the hall door opened, Maurice lifted his hat, after the conventional form of politeness; and the two went their different ways. Each of them felt that the real parting, for the time, had been made on the spot where they had looked up at the evening star and their lips had silently pledged the "still remember me."

It was only about ten o'clock, and the town was full of excitement. The Fitzwilliams lived in that quarter of the city which was the farthest from the neighbourhood of Maurice's home; and, on his return walk after leaving Kathleen's house, he had to pass by the club to which his father belonged and with which he was himself familiar. On the portico Mr. Fitzwilliam, Captain Jerningham, and two or three others were standing and smoking. Fitzwilliam recognised Maurice, and hailed him with that peculiar kind of cordiality which a certain order of man puts on when he desires to emphasise some disagreeable news to one of his acquaintances.

"Surprised to see you at large, Desmond. I was afraid they must have got hold of you already. Jerningham here says he believes there can be no doubt that the government are going to make short work of all you young patriot fellows. Well, since you are free, thus far, come with Jerningham and me. We are going back to my house; and we may as well have a farewell talk and drink together before it becomes Jerningham's duty to conduct you with a cavalry escort to one of Her Majesty's prisons, there to await your time of trial."

Maurice took the chaff quite good-humouredly, and retorted with some pleasantries of his own; and the three remained in talk for a few minutes. But Maurice would not accept Mr. Fitzwilliam's invitation, and he went his way homeward. He felt that he could not desecrate by a conventional hour at Mr. Fitzwilliam's house the memory of that parting on the road outside the city and under the light of the evening star.

## CHAPTER XV

### A CHAPTER OF REACTION

TOWARDS the end of May, Kathleen Fitzwilliam received a letter one day from Maurice Desmond, telling her that he particularly wished to see her, and asking her to meet him at an hour in the afternoon which he named, and at a spot in the wood near to her seaside home where they had met more than once before. Now there was not the slightest reason in the ordinary course of things why Maurice might not have gone directly to Mr. Fitzwilliam's hall door, and asked to see the daughter of the house. But Kathleen loved to surround as many of her meetings as she could with an air of romantic mystery; and she had often impressed on Maurice the necessity of arranging, as far as possible, that her meeting with him should seem the mere work of accident. Maurice for his own part, being still in the years of romance, was by no means unwilling that the conventional ways of society should not be accepted by them as the ways of lovers. So he had his letter conveyed with all becoming mystery to Kathleen, and it is almost needless to say that Kathleen met him at the appointed time and place. The afternoon was not very far advanced, and the sun of early summer sparkled along the trembling waves of the sea.

Kathleen saw in Maurice's look, before they had yet clasped hands, that he had some serious news to tell her.

"What is the matter?" she asked eagerly. "Something has happened. I know it by your eyes."

"Nothing has happened," Maurice answered grimly. "At least, nothing has happened that ought to have happened; and that is the terrible news I have to bring. Kathleen, it is all over!"

"What is all over?" she asked in trembling tones, and gazing wonderingly into his eyes. Kathleen's impression was that something had happened which concerned especially the fortunes of him and her or perhaps concerned only the fortunes of him and her.

"Come this way," Maurice said; and he led her out of the wood and towards the edge of the high ground which looked upon the sea. On their way he told her in quiet words, full of an emotion which he contrived to keep from forcing itself into passionate expression, the news just received by him from Dublin. The man most influential and most intensely filled with the faith of his own cause and his own policy, had been arrested in Dublin, had been suddenly brought to trial, found guilty of treason-felony by the jury, as Maurice declared, specially packed for the purpose, and had been sentenced to fourteen years' transportation. Suddenly Maurice caught her hand in one of his, and pointed with his other hand towards the sea.

"Do you see that vessel, Kathleen?" he asked.

Kathleen saw what her eyes, accustomed to such sights, knew to be a vessel-of-war. She gazed at this picturesque object, but did not at first understand what it had to do with the story her lover had come to tell.

"They have given him," Maurice explained as quietly as he could, "all the honours of a voyage in a war-steamer. That is the vessel which is to carry him, as a convicted felon, to the place of his destination. It was waiting for him before the jury had found their verdict, but those who own the war-vessel had made safe arrangements beforehand that the verdict should be exactly what our rulers desired. He was taken from the dock to the steamer, and the steamer will soon be far out in the ocean. And listen, Kathleen: no hand was raised in Dublin to attempt his rescue. The city was and is

as quiet as a grave; and, indeed, it is the grave of Ireland's hopes."

"I am so sorry," Kathleen began, not knowing very well at first what she ought to say or might be expected to say. Then she roused herself to something like the height of the occasion; and she asked, "Can nothing be done to save him?"

"You see the vessel which carries him. It is there, against the line of the horizon. It will soon be on the ocean. He has been allowed to go, and not a hand was raised to rescue him! Oh, Kathleen, I feel sick of it all. I thought the very stones of Dublin streets would have risen in his defence; and he is there,—out there, you see!"

Kathleen did now begin to see, and the news that Maurice brought her did not seem to answer to her preconceived ideas of heroism and romance. What was the good of trying to become the heroine of a great patriotic drama, if the curtain were to drop feebly and silently down at the end of the first act.

"Is there nothing to be done?" she asked coldly. Maurice took it for granted that the tone of her voice only echoed the despondency and disappointment of a heart which, like his own, was full of the nation's cause.

"Nothing is to be done just now, I am afraid," he replied in accents of melancholy conviction. "What on earth could raise the country to action, since this has failed to do it? Oh, Kathleen, I feel like one heart-broken. To think that it should come to this, after all our hopes and all our vows! We have let our best chance go by us. We have shown the government that they can trample on us."

"Why were you not there?" Kathleen asked; and she looked up to him with sudden reproachful appeal in her eyes, as if he were one of the recognised leaders of a lost cause, who had failed to come to the front at the

moment when, with his presence and his help, the cause might yet have been saved.

Maurice looked at her in some surprise.

"What could I have done, dearest, even if I had been there? I am not a leader of men. I am one of the humblest and obscurest followers. Who would have cared for my advice or have listened to a word of command from me?"

This is not exactly the light in which Kathleen would fain have regarded her lover. She had fondly persuaded herself that the man to whom she had given her love, and for whom she felt sure she had made generous sacrifices, was at least one of the leaders of the cause to which she had become a convert. Even the leader of a forlorn hope would have been better than nothing. And now here was Maurice picturing himself, in tones of apparent sincerity, as a commonplace private in the ranks, whose absence or presence could have been of no account to anybody. A sudden thought came into her mind, which served for a moment to brighten the gloom.

"Tell me," she said, "and tell me truly, Maurice, dearest, did you remain at home because — because you — because you were unwilling to part from me?"

Maurice gave out his answer with a certain reluctance and even diffidence. He loved her so much that the mere thought of parting from her was almost enough, he felt with a pang, to make it hard for him to fulfil his duty with a whole heart. He knew that such a thought had been a trouble to him during these later days; but he knew, too, that it could not have swayed his decision. And now he had to tell the truth. "No," he answered somewhat sadly. "No, Kathleen, it was not that. Much as I love you, and even you can hardly know how much that is, it was not my longing to be with you which kept me here at home while this crisis was expected. I know

that, if I were wanted, if there was anything I could do or could take part in, even if there were any serious intention to attempt anything, Philip would have sent for me in good time, and I should have gone up at his summons."

"Philip? Philip? Not Philip Colston?'

"Yes, Philip Colston, of course."

"Then Philip was there,— up in Dublin all the time, ready at hand for anything that might come."

"Oh, yes, Philip was there. Philip has already come to be a man of note among the leaders in Dublin. They went for him, and he was there. If only all the rest were like Philip, that war-vessel would not have carried its captives so quietly out of Dublin."

There was a moment's pause, and then Kathleen said in a dreamy sort of manner: —

"I remember telling you not long ago that I envied Mononia her lover. Do you know, Maurice, that I can't help feeling the same sort of unworthy sentiment just now."

Maurice looked at her with an almost bewildered expression. For the moment he could not really understand the meaning of her words. When he spoke, there was a tone of bitterness in his voice.

"You may well envy Mononia her lover, Kathleen, if you mean by that to tell me that he is infinitely more worthy of a woman's love than I am. I know that well, Kathleen. I have known — I have known it since we were boys — there can be no possible comparison between him and me. But you have surely not found this out for the first time."

"You don't understand me," Kathleen said rather angrily. "I don't mean anything of the kind. I don't want to make any comparison between you and him. I have shown you already whether I think you worthy of my love or not. I don't envy Mononia because I think

her lover is better than mine. I envy her because her lover is in the place of danger, while mine is here at home, lingering with me on the seashore, and quarrelling with me because of some foolish words that have come from my lips."

"Do I understand, then, that you really think me a coward, Kathleen,—that you really think I was afraid to go to the place of danger, and run my risk along with the others? Great heavens, Kathleen, has it really come to this?" His voice was full of deep emotion, and his eyes were lighted with a glance of genuine anger.

Kathleen was distinctly pleased to find that she had made him angry. She was pleased for two reasons, one general and one particular. The first reason was that she had often thought Maurice somewhat too considerate and thoughtful and self-controlled for an ideal hero of romance; and the other, the particular reason was that in this instance she knew she had been putting herself in the wrong, and believed that Maurice's getting into a bad temper would help her to put herself into the right again.

"You know I meant nothing like that," she exclaimed; and her artistic appreciation of music enabled her to make her voice thrill with the notes of generous indignation. "You know I never could have meant anything of the kind. If I thought you were a man to keep out of the danger, if I thought you were a coward, I never could have loved you. Do you know that?"

"Yes, I know that very well. At least, I thought I did know it, Kathleen, until a moment ago"—

"Oh," exclaimed Kathleen, passionately, "don't go on with that again! You did me wrong, and you know it in your heart that you did me wrong."

"I am deeply sorry if I have hurt you," Maurice said in fullest sincerity. "I spoke hastily. I was nervous and

out of temper. All this terrible business in Dublin has got upon my nerves, and I suppose I hardly knew what I was saying. But you did say something about envying Mononia because her lover was in the place of danger while yours was not; and this hurt me, and made me lose my temper. But you did say this, Kathleen, and I don't even know what you meant."

Kathleen now struck a brighter note in her talk. She thought this little trouble had gone far enough, and thought, perhaps, that she had gone rather too far in her manner of expressing the disappointment which she felt at the sudden turn political affairs had taken.

"All I meant was this, you silly boy," she replied,—and she laid her hand upon his shoulder,—"all I meant was that I want to have my lover in the front of everything, and that I get annoyed when any other girl's lover seems to have got himself into a more prominent position. I want you, bad-tempered boy though you are, to be ever so much more prominent and more talked about and more admired than Philip Colston; and I am inclined to lose my temper when people down here talk to me of Philip Colston, as if there were nobody like him, and so I get jealous of him, dearest Maurice, because of you, for I want everybody to talk about you and praise you, and not him. There now, do you understand? but, indeed, I am afraid it is very hard to make any man, no matter how good his brains may be, understand always what we women feel. Come, let us have no more of this. I suppose we have both lost our tempers about nothing, and the only way to end it now is to kiss and be friends," And, drawing Maurice down towards her, she suited the action to the word; and Maurice may perhaps be excused if for that moment the crisis in Dublin was not uppermost in his feelings.

"Come," said Kathleen, "we had better go back to the woods; and I must soon get home. See! There

is nothing of the steamer visible now on the horizon. I must get home, Maurice, dearest. Can you come to dine with us, and stay down here for the night?"

Maurice shook his head dejectedly.

"No," he replied, "that is quite out of the question. I must go back at once. I have numbers of people to see. We shall be talking over this business half the night or all the night, I dare say; and we may have messages at any moment from Dublin, telling us what we are to do. I made literally a sort of escape, Kathleen, to come down here and see you once again, and speak to you and hear your voice, before anything else happens."

"Then you think something may happen even yet?" she asked eagerly.

"I am afraid to say how despondent I feel. Kathleen, I'm almost in despair. Too late, too late, seems to me the sentence pronounced upon our hopes. The energy and the passion of the country have been raised to such a pitch, and now nothing is done. The tide has turned, and we are left stranded on the shore."

"But the tide will turn again, and the vessel will be afloat once more. Will it not, Maurice?"

"Well, well, that ought to be so, dearest," he said with a sigh. "I ought to think so, perhaps I shall think so to-morrow; but just now I am down, down in the depths, and even you, Kathleen, can hardly quite raise me up again."

"Come, come, it is not like you to be in this despondent mood; and I know you will think better of everything to-morrow. Your ship will float again, Maurice; and you will come and bring me some good news before long. Then you will not stay and dine with us to-night?"

"Dearest, I cannot. I must get back at once."

"I know I must not press you," Kathleen said with a

bright glance at him, "when you speak in that tone. I know that my power over you does not get so far as that. Well, well, perhaps it is all the better; for we have Captain Jerningham dining with us, and you and I might not have much chance of a talk together, and, then, I don't think you greatly take to Captain Jerningham."

"I don't much like Jerningham," said Maurice, gloomily. "I don't think we get on very well together."

"But Captain Jerningham likes you very much. Yes, indeed, he told me so; and he is very anxious that you should keep out of trouble."

"That was truly kind of him," Maurice said with a certain dash of bitterness in his voice. "I have nothing particular to say against him, but you can't expect me to take very much to an English redcoat."

"Yes, but that is not all," Kathleen declared; and she sent him one of her arch, coquettish glances. "It was not only as the military representative of British rule that you objected to Captain Jerningham, dear Maurice. Don't you remember how jealous you were that night because I danced so much with him? I don't think you have ever quite got over that unlucky first impression of poor Captain Jerningham."

Maurice's good humour had entirely returned by this time.

"Well, well," he said, "I frankly confess that I was rather put out that night by the manner in which you allowed yourself to be absorbed by the attentions of Captain Jerningham. But, then, things have changed a good deal since that night, haven't they, Kathleen? I did not know at that time that you cared anything about me, and now I know"—

"Now you know that I love you," she said, interrupting him.

"Yes, I know it now, indeed; and I haven't the slight-

est feeling of jealousy towards Captain Jerningham, and I don't care how often you dance with him this evening."

"But we shall not have any dancing this evening," she said, taking his words rather literally.

"Well, what I mean is that I am not jealous about you any more, dearest."

"Come, sir, don't be too self-assured and self-conceited. Captain Jerningham is a very charming man and quite good-looking; and, if I am to be left to his society, and if you will go rushing back to the city, although you do not even profess to believe that anything is going to be done, why, then, you must put up with the disadvantage which the French tell us is always the luck of the absent?"

"You sweetest and dearest girl," Maurice exclaimed fervently. "As if I did not thoroughly understand why you talk in this sort of way! As if I did not know, as well as you do, that you're only trying to win my thoughts away from the gloom of things around, and to distract me, even for a moment, out of my despondency. My sweet Kathleen,— my own! You may talk with Captain Jerningham this evening as much as you like, and I shall not feel the slightest pang of jealousy. Come what will, whatever the fortunes of the coming hours may bring, you will always be in my mind and in my heart; and the thought of you will bring only comfort, and courage and hope to me. Now I must go— if you will not let me see you safely to your home."

"No, you had better not be seen," she said hurriedly; "and you must go at once. Good-bye, Maurice."

"Good-bye, Kathleen."

Then, after another overt act or two of farewell, the lovers separated. Maurice felt sure that he thoroughly understood Kathleen. Kathleen felt sure that she thoroughly understood Maurice, and so indeed she did. But it is not quite certain whether Maurice's impressions

were as well founded as hers. Kathleen, as she dered homeward, did not feel by any means sure she quite understood herself. She struggled agains thought that the romance of her life did not now s as heroic as she had fondly dreamed it would be. it really all going to end there? she asked herself; was she not to be a heroine, after all?

## CHAPTER XVI

### HOW COUNSELLOR COLSTON STOOD FOR PARLIAMENT

COUNSELLOR COLSTON, the uncle of Philip, has already been mentioned passingly in these pages. It is necessary to inform the English reader, and it may be necessary even to inform Irish readers of the younger generation, that at the time of this story a practising barrister was always spoken of in Ireland as a counsellor. Mr. Colston, the eminent advocate, was therefore known to the community as Counsellor Colston; while in the circle of his more immediate friends he was generally mentioned as the counsellor, being apparently the one counsellor of whom they could be supposed to have knowledge. Counsellor Colston was a very clever and ambitious man. He had by far the largest practice in the city, county, and district to which he belonged; and his was one of the most conspicuous figures in the Dublin law courts. He was a brilliant speaker, with a fluency which could run for any length of speech necessary in his case, and never had occasion to come to one second's pause for the finding of the right word. He had made himself popular among all classes, and had identified himself with every local movement which had to do with the improvement of the city or the benefit of the poor. So far as it was possible for him, consistently with his own most engrossing personal ambitions, he was all things to all men. He never failed to recognise the humblest acquaintance. He invariably beamed with courtesy on the poorest as well as on the richest. He was ready to deliver a speech at any public ceremonial whatever, provided it were not a popular demonstration on what he considered the losing side; and at the dinners of benevolent associations no tongue could appeal more persuasively than his to the

sympathies of his fellow-guests or extract more easily the money from their pockets.

The death of his elder brother, who had been a widower, left the son, Philip, in the sole charge of his uncle; and Counsellor Colston had never been a marrying man. Philip's father had left but a small amount of money behind him for his son; and Counsellor Colston had taken charge of this small amount, and invested it in the best way he could for the young fellow's benefit. He had been a most kindly and generous uncle, treating Philip exactly as if he were his own son; and it was generally understood amongst all the friends of the family that Philip was called to the bar, for which he had always been destined, would be engaged with his uncle in most cases coming before the local courts, would gradually succeed to his general practice, and in the end would become his heir. Philip, therefore, was regarded as a very rising young man, destined some day to distinct worldly prosperity. The political cloud came up, however, and threw its shadows on the fortunes of the young man.

Counsellor Colston, as has been said, was very ambitious. He was growing tired of his practice at the bar, and he was anxious for a seat on the bench. His friends even said that the position which he had especially marked out for himself, as the dignified reward for his services and his loyalty, was that of Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Therefore, Counsellor Colston was, above all things, a man devotedly loyal to the government. He took good care, of course, to be patriotic in his own way; and he had won many a cheer at popular gatherings by his eloquent eulogies of Ireland's genius, Ireland's scenery, and Ireland's natural resources. But he always took good care to remind his hearers that Ireland's best hopes lay in her loyalty to the British Crown, and her ready co-operation in every work and

every enterprise which could expand the influence of the British Empire. Therefore, it was something of a surprise to him when he found that his nephew Philip, during his student days at Trinity College, Dublin, was becoming affected by the wild ideas about patriotism and nationality which were spreading among some of his college associates. This, however, did not much trouble Counsellor Colston at first, because he took it for granted that the study of the classics was apt to fill the minds of clever young fellows with wild nonsense about liberty, resisting tyranny, and so forth, and that from reading Greek orators and poets these young fellows were led on to read Byron, and to be filled with nonsense about Salamis and Marathon. No harm, he thought, was likely to come of that sort of thing; and, indeed, he had known several young men, belonging even to noble families, who had gone through all that chapter of life without being any the worse for it, and made just as good county magistrates and deputy lieutenants and even members of the House of Lords as if they had never declaimed about the duty of resisting tyrants.

But things began to look differently when the Young Ireland party came into existence, and when, after a while, it broke wholly away from the constitutional policy of Daniel O'Connell and proclaimed a policy which, to Counsellor Colston's mind, seemed that of actual rebellion. To his great dismay he found that his nephew Philip was thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the new movement, and could not be won or shaken from his position by any argument or appeal which his eloquent uncle and wise guardian might address to him. Still, however, Counsellor Colston had hopes that the whole thing would pass quietly away, that the general public would grow tired of listening to eloquent orations about Marathon and Salamis and Red Hugh O'Neill and

Wolfe Tone, that the government would take no notice of these foolish speech-makings, that Philip would become absorbed in his legal studies, would be happily called to the bar, and begin a successful career in the law courts. Counsellor Colston and his nephew had meantime had many long arguments on these subjects, but the uncle found the nephew a difficult antagonist to deal with. Philip had much of his uncle's fluency, and was never without a reply to any argument, however authoritative; and then he was full of new ideas and new quotations on all manner of subjects, which bewildered the learned counsellor, who had not even heard the names, up to that time, of many European orators and patriots whom Philip proclaimed as undisputed and supreme authorities on all questions concerning popular liberty and the rights of man.

Counsellor Colston was of course not pleased with this sort of thing; but for a while it seemed to him that nothing very serious could come of Philip's extraordinary views, which, after all, would have been endurable enough in a debating society, and could not have any very damaging effect on the career of a promising advocate, anxious for elevation to the bench of justice. But matters assumed a very different aspect when the Young Ireland movement proclaimed itself a movement in favour of armed rebellion, and when one of its leaders was actually brought to trial on a charge of treason-felony, and was sentenced to a long term of transportation to a convict settlement. Then Counseller Colston began to think that it would never do for him to have a nephew, and, indeed, a professional pupil, going about the city and the county, and manifesting at public meetings the identity of his opinions with those for avowing which a man had just been sentenced to transportation. Counsellor Colston felt that the time had come for reasserting his authority and the supremacy and majesty of

he law in his own household, and for clearing himself of any possible implication in such outrageous doctrine. The hour was particularly unpropitious, so far as Counsellor Colston was concerned, for patriotic effusiveness on the part of a member of his family. A vacancy had just occurred in the representation of the city, caused by the retirement of one of the sitting members who had grown too old to care about frequent visits to London; and Counsellor Colston had made up his mind to offer himself as a candidate for the vacant place.

Counsellor Colston had for some time begun to think that his chances of promotion to the bench directly from the bar were not as encouraging as he could have wished, and it was the opinion of himself and his friends that a seat in the House of Commons would be the best place from which to impress the government with a sense of his merits. He might thus easily be made first Irish Solicitor-general and then Irish Attorney-general; and then, if fortune continued to favour him, the way to the position of Irish Lord Chancellor ought to be open and secure. Mr. Colston had gone in for Liberal, or what were then called in Ireland Whig, politics; but his uttermost reach of Liberalism, or of Whigism, had not carried him beyond the most complete devotion to the ruling powers, whatever they might be, and he had no sympathy with the Young Ireland movement. Even O'Connell had often gone too far for the loyalty of Counsellor Colston, and the Young Irelanders he regarded as outside the bounds of loyal and respectable citizenship. There was sure to be a contest for the vacant seat. Colston's opponent was certain to be a Tory of the good old order, and the contest was likely in any case to be keen; but the chances were decidedly in favour of the Liberal candidate. Those were the days before revolutionists and anarchists, like Cobden, Bright, and Gladstone, had started the wild idea that all

well-conducted citizens in a civilized community ought to have votes, even although they did not live in houses paying a certain considerable amount of yearly rent; and therefore the spread of Young Irelanders' opinions did not alarm Counsellor Colston in the least, so far as the chances of the election were concerned. He knew of course quite well that the majority of the male population of the city had no more to do with the voting at an election than they had to do with the Contents and the Non-contents during a division in the House of Lords. But then, if it were to come out during the contest that Counsellor Colston had a nephew who was prominent in the Young Ireland cause,—if Counsellor Colston's enemies were to throw it in his face, as they would be almost certain to do, that his nephew was a devoted follower of the man who had just been sentenced to fourteen years' transportation,—the effect on his chances of promotion to legal office might be seriously damaged. Colston was anxious to get into the House of Commons for the sake of serving his country or even for the sake of displaying his eloquence. His object was to offer himself to the government for promotion, and this was the very object which might be most injuriously affected by any public blazoning of his nephew's disloyal goings-on. Therefore, Mr. Colston made up his mind that the time had come when he must have an understanding with his nephew, and that he must appeal from Philip the Young Ireland orator to Philip the expectant heir.

Mr. Colston lived in a stately, old-fashioned house in a fine quarter of the city. Just at this particular time he was not allowed much peaceful enjoyment of his fine house, for the reason that he was constantly waited on by pressing deputations who wanted to know his precise views about this or that imperilled interest in trade and commerce, especially in the shipping interest; and he

was called upon to explain the exact measures which he proposed to introduce into the House of Commons for the remedy of various grievances inflicted on those important branches of the tree of national prosperity. It sometimes happened also that a crowd with band and banners gathered under Counsellor Colston's drawing-room windows at a late hour in the evening, and that Colston and some of his guests had to leave the dining-room, at whatever discomfort to themselves, mount the stairs, come out on the drawing-room balcony, and deliver speeches to their enthusiastic admirers in the street. Counsellor Colston put up with all this resolutely, and with a commendable appearance of cordial good humour, which was all the more creditable to him seeing that he did not believe the chances of his election would be affected in any perceptible degree by the replies to deputations or the speeches delivered from the drawing-room balcony. He knew perfectly well that, when the choice of the electors came to be, as it was in this instance, simply a choice between Liberal and Tory, the result was not to be affected in any serious way by the intervention of what might be called side issues. This or that question of inconvenience to a particular trade or to some department of the shipping interest might be a very important matter in its way; but, when a voter had to decide whether to give his suffrage to a Liberal or to a Tory, he was apt to be carried away by his traditional family principles, and to tell himself that he could not possibly help the enemy of his most fondly cherished political creed to obtain a seat in the House of Commons.

In those days, it need hardly be said, men recorded their votes publicly and disdained, or at all events had not obtained, the protection of the ballot. Therefore, if a respectable middle-aged clerk with a wife and family depending on him should feel a moment's temptation to give a thoroughly independent vote, he had to reflect

that his employer as well as everybody else in the city would know how he had voted, and that the result might be unfortunate for his expectations of an early increase in salary. Counsellor Colston, therefore, was very respectful and attentive to all the deputations and to the nightly crowds; for he had a strong desire to stand well with all classes of his fellow-citizens, but the too frequent recurrence of these visitations did not tend to put him in a constant good humour, and he had many troubles of the kind on the day when he made up his mind to come to an explanation with his nephew.

The day when Counsellor Colston made up his mind to take this decisive step was one of the days during which Phil was absent in Dublin. The explanation therefore had to be postponed for a little; and, when it did come about, it was at a time peculiarly unfavourable to a temper of conciliation or compromise on either side. It was the day of Phil's return from Dublin; and the young man was in a mood of deep disappointment, although his was not a nature which yielded much to despondency. He was not for a moment tempted, as Maurice had been, to despair of the national cause; and his mind was mainly occupied with schemes and projects, and waking dreams about the next move of the Young Ireland party. But, although Philip was not in a despondent humour, yet it must be owned that he was not exactly in the temper which disposes itself for ready and patient consideration of worldly-wise counsels. His uncle, on the other hand, had been pestered a good deal during the day by letters and by deputations of various kinds, and by invitations to pledge himself to all manner of chimerical or irreconcilable projects; and he had an important dinner party arranged for that evening, at which some guests were to attend to whom he especially wished to be agreeable. He had left a message for Philip to the effect that he wished to see him

in the library an hour before the time for the dinner party.

When the appointed time was approaching, Counsellor Colston had been brought by all the various worries and troubles of the day into a state of nervous irritation, or perhaps it might be called in more homely language, fussiness, which made him annoyed with himself. Counsellor Colston's distinguishing attributes as an advocate were his limitless command of eloquent words, and a control of nerve and temper which nothing could shake. This was the part he had always taken on himself to play, and it must be allowed that he played it with remarkable success. He had, however, his outbreaks of nerves and his bursts of temper; but these he always endeavoured to reserve for his mental relief in domestic life. After all, the very greatest of actors cannot be expected to keep on acting his favourite part during the whole of his private life. We know that John Kemble had his facetious moments when the tragedy was not going on, and it is understood that in private life Mr. Arthur Roberts is sometimes silent and serious. But it greatly annoyed Counsellor Colston when he found his nerves and his temper getting the better of him at home, and making him forget the part to which he had devoted himself abroad. On this particular evening, therefore, the learned counsel was vexed with himself when, it became apparent to him that he could not meet his nephew with the intellectual composure and superior dignity which he had desired to exhibit on so momentous an occasion. Then, again, he was delayed by various interruption on his homeward way; and he did not reach his library until after the appointed time, whereas it was one of the principles of his life not to fail by a moment in punctuality. This further annoyed him; and the result was that, when he made his appearance in his library, he presented himself in a somewhat flustered condition.

Philip was seated at a desk, writing a letter; and, when he heard his uncle enter the room, he rose, and advanced to meet him with a welcoming smile. The uncle and nephew had not met for some days; and Philip for many reasons, not all of them connected with politics, was glad to be home again. His uncle received the welcome in a manner rather impatient and almost ungracious,—a manner which seemed to say, "Well, well, let us get through this ceremony as quickly as possible and come to business." Philip saw by the expression in his uncle's face that something disagreeable was to be expected, and he already guessed at its nature.

"Now look here, Philip," the learned counsellor began, and his nephew always knew that something was wrong when his uncle addressed him as Philip, "I have something serious to say to you; and there isn't much time to say it in, for this confounded dinner party is coming on. Don't you think we have had rather too much of this patriotic business, and that it is almost time to think of giving it up?"

"Well, my dear uncle, of course we don't agree in politics; and I am very sorry for it. I wish ever so much that we did agree."

"By which I presume you mean that I could agree with you,— that I were of your way of thinking."

"That is what I mean," Philip said with a frank smile, "and not only on personal grounds, I can assure you. I think it is a great pity that a man of your commanding ability should be lost to the good cause."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure, to have so high an opinion of your old uncle's ability; but I have not come to discuss that question just now or to discuss the political merits of what you are pleased to call the good cause. I want to ask you whether you think it becoming for a young man in your position to be the avowed associate of a gang of rebels against the Queen and the laws of the country."

"But, uncle, you always knew what my opinions were. You knew that I had expressed them years ago, when I was a young student at Trinity College; and I remember very well that you listened to one of my speeches there, and that you made me very proud and happy by giving it some words of praise."

"Yes, yes, that's all very well. I daresay I was foolishly good-natured, and wished to encourage a young fellow when he was talking only harmless nonsense; but the condition of things is totally different now. At that time it was only school-boy talk about the green flag and the sunburst, and the glories of Brian the brave, and Wolfe Tone, and all that sort of thing; and no particular harm seemed likely to come from mere youthful declamation. But see what is going on all around us now. We have fellows going about the country inciting ignorant mobs to armed rebellion, and one of your heroes and leaders has already been found guilty of treasonable offence"—

"Made treason for the purpose by special act of Parliament," Philip calmly interjected.

"I don't care about that, sir. He was put on his trial for breaking the law, and that's all I want to know. He was put on his trial and found guilty, and sentenced very properly to transportation for fourteen years; and what I want to know now is whether mischief enough has not been done already, and whether the time has not come for rational human beings to refuse any further countenance to this monstrous folly. What I want to know from you, Philip Colston, is whether you have or have not made up your mind, once for all, to save yourself from the disgrace and the danger of any further association with the advocates of armed rebellion. That is the question to which I want to have an explicit answer. But I don't want to hurry you, Philip,"— the uncle suddenly remembered that he had still to dress for dinner,— "and, if

you would rather have time to reconsider the whole situation, and to make up your mind, I have not the slightest objection to a postponement of this conversation until some convenient hour to-morrow."

"I have no wish to put off the answer," Philip answered in a quiet voice. "Nothing would be gained by putting it off. Nothing on earth would change my determination. I have pledged my heart and soul and spirit, for life or death, to the cause of Ireland."

"To what you are pleased to regard as the cause of Ireland," his uncle harshly interrupted.

"To what I am pleased to regard as the cause of Ireland. I can only judge according to my lights whether it is or whether it is not the national cause of Ireland. I am satisfied that it is; and so, come what will, I shall be true to it. Dear uncle, I am deeply grateful to you, and I am deeply attached to you as well,—you have been as a father to me for all these many years; but, even if you were my father, there are things I could not do to please you, and this is one of them. I must be true to my country. Many, too many, have been false to her."

"I suppose you have not considered," Counsellor Colston said sarcastically, "whether your heroic course of action may not have some injurious effect on the career of the uncle to whom you profess so much gratitude. Has it ever occured to your mind that it may be a serious injury to me in my professional career if I have a nephew living in my house who is the political associate of rebels and outlaws?"

"Living in my house!" The words came with a painful shock to Philip, and for a moment seemed to shake him from his balance. But he pulled himself together, and made his reply firmly.

"Yes, my dear uncle, I have lately been thinking of all that. These late events have brought the question

distinctly before my mind. I can see that it must be a disadvantage to you in your professional career to have such a nephew as I am living in your house, as you say,"— he could not help laying a certain emphasis on the words "living in your house," — "and I think the time has come when you ought to be relieved from such a disadvantage. You have been ever so kind to me, and I cannot forget your kindness; but the very gratitude that I owe you is only another reason why I should not interfere with your life and your prospects. Dear uncle, my mind is absolutely made up; and nothing can change me. I shall leave your house, and go my own way." Here Philip rose to his feet as if to take his departure.

"Stop, stop!" his uncle said impatiently. "All this can't be settled in a moment. You don't propose to walk out of this house to-night, I presume. We can talk this over to-morrow, when I am less hurried, and when we are both in a better temper for discussion."

Philip shook his head sadly.

"It is of no use," he said, "putting off the decision on such a question as this. Nothing could possibly happen between now and this time to-morrow to alter my purpose, unless a miracle from heaven; and miracles from heaven are not likely to be wrought in my case. You will find my resolve just the same to-morrow as it is to-day; and, indeed, the impulse ought to have come from me before this, and ought not to have been left to you. I must go."

"Perhaps you are aware," Counsellor Colston said with severe politeness, "that I have a dinner party to entertain this evening. Perhaps you have not forgotten that you are expected to help me in doing the honours to my guests. Or perhaps you think it would be an agreeable thing for me to have it known amongst the company that just before sitting down to dinner I had turned the only son of my only brother out of doors."

Philip was about to interpose some remonstrance, when his uncle waved him aside as he might have waved aside some junior counsel who was making superfluous offers to come to his assistance in a great law case.

"Perhaps," the learned counsel went on, "you are aware that the Protestant bishop of the diocese is one of my guests; and perhaps you think it would be an edifying thing if he were enabled to inform his flock how the Catholic uncle had turned his only nephew out of doors just before sitting down to a festive dinner party."

Full of pain as the moment was, Phil Colston could hardly repress a grim smile at the manner in which his uncle worked out these absurd suggestions. Many a time had he heard the learned counsel thus play upon and pervert the evidence of a witness for the bewilderment of a jury. All the same, he could not help admitting to himself that there was a certain grain of reason in Mr. Colston's argument.

"Of course," he said as cheerily as he could, "if it would be of any convenience to you, however slight, that I should remain in your house for this night and help to entertain your guests, I should be the most ungrateful and inconsiderate fellow alive if I were to allow any feeling of mine to stand in the way. Let us put off the rest of our talk till to-morrow, if you like that better. I can only say, once again, that my resolve to-morrow will be just the same as it is to-day."

"Well, well, we shall see," his uncle said hastily. "A night's sleep over the matter won't do either of us any harm. And now I really must go and dress, for these fellows will soon begin to arrive. I see you are dressed already, but, then, you have not had quite so busy a day of it as I have had. By Jove, I sometimes wish that there were no such things as politics and elections in this world."

Then the learned counsellor hurried off to dress for

dinner, and Philip was left alone in the library. That library had been his favourite room since his early boyhood. Some of the volumes on its shelves had been the most loved companions of his youth. The very law-books bound in yellow calf appealed to him tenderly now, as if they were dear old friends from whom he was to part forever. In that old home everything had for many years seemed safe and settled for him. It was like some fortress protecting his life and enabling him to look out with pleased and undisturbed interest over the movements of life all around. Now he was to leave that old home, and begin a new and strained existence, to make a way for himself or to fall by the roadside and perish. He knew it could not be otherwise, he had chosen his course; and there was not in his breast at that trying moment the faintest gleam of regret for the decision he had made. In all that year of political convulsion throughout the world there was not a young patriot anywhere with a heart more sincerely and absolutely given up to what he believed to be the cause of his country and his people than poor Phil Colston as he stood in his uncle's library, looking around it with loving glances for almost the very last time, and trying to bring himself into a suitable frame of mind for the entertainment of the guests at his uncle's dinner party.

The readers of this story may be spared any account of that dinner party. It was a very trying entertainment to Phil Colston; but he fought it out like a man, and never allowed any of the guests to suppose for a moment that he was not in the highest animal spirits. Indeed, some of them remarked to each other in the smoking-room of the club that same night that they were glad to see there was evidently not a particle of truth in the reports going about to the effect that Phil Colston's political associations were becoming a great source of annoyance to his uncle, and that the uncle and nephew did not

of late get on very well together. Next day, however, it became known in the city that Counsellor Colston and his nephew had absolutely parted, that Phil had left his uncle's house, and had gone forth to make his own way in the world, as best he could. Some accounts would have it that the uncle, indignant at Phil's disloyal and rebellious goings-on, had sternly cast him forth, and bidden him never to profane by a returning foot the loyalty and the respectability of that threshold. Others gave it out that Phil had borne with his uncle's arrogance, narrowness of mind, selfish ambition, and unpatriotic subserviency until the flesh and blood of generous youth could bear it no longer; and Phil had exiled himself from his uncle's home, and had gone forth determined to devote his life to the cause of his country. These different stories came, it need hardly be said, from sets of persons whose political principles inclined them either to the side of Counsellor Colston or of Counsellor Colston's nephew, and indeed were of kin, in their modest way, with the spirit of more important historical narratives. But, as all historical narratives which profess to deal with one set of events and persons have some substance of truth in them, so all the various stories which were told for several days about what had happened in Counsellor Colston's household were agreed in the one statement, that Phil and his uncle had parted, and in that statement were absolutely correct. Phil took up his abode for the present in the house of Mr. Conrad, the first friend with whom he had gone into consultation on the day of his leaving his uncle's house, and who had positively insisted that his former pupil should accept for some days, at least, the shelter of his old schoolmaster's home.

## CHAPTER XVII

### THE ELECTION

THE appearance of the usually quiet city underwent a complete transformation during the next few days by the excitement and the turmoil, the bands and banners, the cheering and the counter-cheering of the election contest. An election at that time was very different in all its arrangements from the ceremonial to which in later days we have become accustomed. The day of nomination was a grand occasion for the makers of speeches. The competing candidates had to be solemnly proposed and seconded in public speeches delivered commonly on hustings erected in the open air. The crowd filled whatever vacant space there was outside; and, as the crowd was naturally divided in opinion, it naturally followed that the supporters of one candidate utterly refused to listen to any other candidate, and did their best to drown his every sentence by yells and hisses and hootings, and generally, indeed, endeavoured to still further discourage his efforts at eloquence by what would be called, in the language of the physician, the exhibition of rotten eggs, dead cats, and brickbats. Now that, of course, was a game which any number of disputing parties could equally play at; and, if the friends of candidate number two were thus determined to mar the display of candidate number one, it was but to be expected that the admirers of candidate number one should in their turn put obstacles in the way of candidate number two.

All this, of course, is ancient history now, especially to those who are familiar with the adventures of Mr. Pickwick; but there were some peculiarities about an Irish election which did not, if we are correctly informed, belong to the development of an election in England.

For example, on the day of nomination at an Irish election it was the recognised custom for any elector whom the spirit moved to such an exploit to get up and propose the name of any one who occurred to him as a fit and proper person to represent that particular constituency in the House of Commons. This proposal, being duly made, secured for the person thus nominated the right to make a speech in his turn; and if, at the close of his speech, he declared that he declined to accept the honourable position offered to him, and that he would not take any part in the contest, there was an end of the candidature; and he was not responsible for any share in the election expenses. He had had in fact the opportunity and the honour and glory of delivering speeches on that grand occasion, and it cost him nothing.

Now in Ireland it was a regular part of the proceedings at every nomination day that somebody should thus be proposed who had not the least idea of standing as a candidate, and not the remotest chance of being elected if he did stand, but who was pleased and proud to be thus signalled out as a fit and proper person to deliver a speech on so important an occasion. In Ireland a grand display of military force formed a picturesque part of the election ceremonial, even on the somewhat rare occasion when it was not called upon to take an active part in the restoration of order. In England the practice was, when an election was taking place in a garrison town, to confine the troops to barracks during the period of the contest; but in Ireland under similar conditions the military were kept parading the town at all hours, apparently for the purpose of letting the civilian inhabitants see that, if they tried too much of their demonstrative nonsense, the strong arm of the government was there ready to repress them. The crowd who filled the streets were in general well disposed to like the sight of the soldiers, and to enjoy the military display, which, indeed, they regarded as

part of the general holiday created by the election; and the women indulged in good-humoured and loud-spoken criticisms on the appearance and discipline of the soldiers as they marched along. If the fervour of political controversy led to street disturbance, and a charge of cavalry was ordered to disperse a tumultuous crowd, then the soldiers came in for their turn of popular hostility; and the dead cats and brickbats were directed against them, and not against the rival candidates. Each day, however, began good-humouredly enough; and the general feeling among the crowds in the streets seemed to be that the soldiers were only doing their duty, poor fellows, and that it was no fault of theirs if they were compelled to do disagreeable things. A spirit of rough good humour prevailed for the most part throughout the boisterous demonstration.

Kathleen Fitzwilliam, sitting at her window at an early hour of nomination day, saw Captain Jerningham riding with his cavalry on his way from the barracks to the neighbourhood of the court-house, where the nomination was to take place. Captain Jerningham's horse was startled by a sudden outburst of blended cheering and hostile yelling, as two rival crowds met in an adjacent square, and the horse reared and plunged for a moment or two. Kathleen felt a shock of alarm; but she soon felt only admiration and pride when she saw with what easy skill and command her military admirer kept his seat, and brought his horse once again under control. She could not help admitting to herself that Captain Jerningham in his scarlet uniform, on his jet-black horse, and at the head of his men, seemed a decidedly picturesque and even heroic figure; and it occurred to her with a sensation of discomfort that the leader of a popular movement, however patriotic it might be, must have a good deal to do with some unsightly and vulgar crowds as those which she saw rushing confusedly along the

streets. When lovely woman looks out from her balcony, she is perhaps sometimes apt to take too narrowly artistic a view of popular and patriotic demonstrations.

The ceremonial of nomination took place in the city court-house, and not, according to the fashion of English elections of the same time, on the hustings in the open air. One of the two great law courts which the building contained was set apart for the ceremonies of nomination. It seems almost superfluous to say that the court was crowded to excess in every part. The jury box, the rows of benches usually consigned to counsellors and solicitors, the galleries, the passages, the very floor of the court, were crammed with spectators; while the bench of justice alone was vacant, and that only because it was reserved for the presiding officials, the rival candidates, the immediate friends of the rivals, and these especially favoured personages had no need to make their appearance before the hour appointed for the opening of the day's business. Save for this one reserved space, the whole court was crowded to its uttermost capacity of comprehension for hours before the opening of the nomination ceremony. The three newspapers of the city alike observed next morning in their reports the fact that "every coigne of vantage" in the court-house was thus occupied; and, indeed, it may well be doubted whether from that time to the present there has even been a crowd assembled for any purpose within these islands concerning which some newspaper reporter did not introduce an allusion to the "coigne of vantage." The art of Shakespearian quotation, it will be seen from this instance, was not wholly unknown to the journalist of 1848. When the appointed hour arrived, the mayor of the city and the sheriffs and other local officials made their appearance on the bench of justice; and with them came the rival candidates with their leading supporters and friends. So far as the outer world knew, there were

but two rival candidates for this coming election. One was of course our friend, Counsellor Colston; and the other was Sir George Borderley, a Tory landlord of long established family, a leading member of the local conservative club and a man who was always ready to celebrate with full-flowing honours the glorious, pious, and immortal memory of King William III. We need not describe at any length the more formal part of the day's proceedings. Any of our readers who are anxious for such a study will no doubt find full and accurate reports in the local newspapers of the day. It is enough for the purposes of the story to say that both candidates were proposed with eloquent and well-deserved eulogy, the eloquent eulogy in each case being disturbed not a little by interjected commentary from the galleries, sometimes irrelevant and sometimes decidedly relevant, but likewise decidedly rude and personal.

Now the general expectation of the assembly was that, when the claims of the two recognised and expected candidates had been duly set forth, the work of the less important actors in the scene would be at an end; and the two rival performers with the greater would be allowed, each in his turn, to assert his title to the honours of the occasion. It is well to mention at this stage of the narrative the fact that among those who occupied seats on some of the benches usually assigned to the junior bar were Mr. Conrad and Philip Colston. Philip had been somewhat doubtful as to whether he ought to be present at the nomination, seeing that most people in the city knew all, and some of them indeed much more than all, about the separation between him and his uncle. Mr. Conrad, however, thought the matter over, and came to the conclusion that, on the whole, it would be better, in view of a possible reconciliation later on, if Philip were to show himself at the ceremonial, just as if nothing had occurred which would prevent him from

feeling an interest in his uncle's candidature. Mr. Conrad's views prevailed with Philip, whose natural inclinations went that way for various reasons; and the two had accordingly obtained places in the court. Mr. Conrad, it may be observed, had not had much experience of nomination days; and it did not occur to his mind that a certain interruption to the expected arrangements might take place, which interruption, as will presently be seen, actually did take place. No thought of any such possible occurrence had ever come into Philip's mind, and he regarded himself as a mere outside observer of the day's proceedings.

When the speeches proposing and introducing the two rival candidates had been got through, the presiding officer rose from his seat, and, apparently as a matter of form, asked whether any other elector had a candidate to propose. He took it for granted, no doubt, that no such proposal was to be made; and he was on the point of inviting the elder candidate, the Conservative, to come forward and address the assembly, when there was a certain stir and commotion visible among the crowd in and around the back benches, and a well-known citizen, Mr. Myles O'Flynn, was seen to be struggling his way to the front, and was heard to announce that he had a candidate to propose. Now Mr. Myles O'Flynn was well known to almost every one in the court. He was a man much given to the making of speeches at public meetings, but generally at meetings which had to do with questions of popular education and with the wrongs inflicted on dissenting bodies by the existence of a State Church. By most of his easy-going neighbours he was regarded as what would be called in later days a "crank"; but people respected his integrity and his independence, and it was the universal conviction that, if Myles O'Flynn desired to make a speech on any occasion, it was not in the power of any mortal authority, without the use of

actual physical force, to prevent him from delivering his oration. The presiding officer, in this particular instance, felt quite sure that the majority of the crowd would be glad of an unexpected interruption of the day's ceremonial, and that, no matter what Mr. Myles O'Flynn might desire to say, his desire would be welcomed by most of the audience, if only for the fun of the thing. Therefore, the presiding officer wisely recognised, without any hint of demur, Mr. O'Flynn's right to address the assembly and to propose any one whom he might consider to be a fit and proper candidate. Mr. O'Flynn was courteously invited to take his place upon the bench of justice; and, when he had scuffled his way through the crowd and made his appearance in front of the now seated presiding officer, he was received with some good-humoured cheers, with some "ironical cheers," according to the language of more modern reports, and with boisterous bursts of laughter. Mr. Conrad and Phil Colston craned forward with amused interest to listen to O'Flynn's oration, little indeed suspecting what the orator's proposition was to be.

Mr. O'Flynn spoke in strong, shrill tones, and with amazing volubility even for an orator in the south of Ireland. He began by declaring that neither of the candidates now proposed could possibly be considered as a fit and proper representative of the great majority among their fellow-citizens. He had nothing to say against either gentleman personally,— such was his considerate declaration,— but he regarded each of them as the representative of an old-fashioned and outworn political section, who had no conception whatever of the newer ideas and the broader principles which were now opening a wide horizon for intelligent human creatures. At this point in his speech Mr. O'Flynn was interrupted by loud cries of "Whose your man?" "Give us his name," "Cut it short," and various expressions of a

desire to pluck out the heart of his mystery at once. Thus stimulated, Mr. O'Flynn announced at the highest pitch of his voice that he had to propose as a fit and proper candidate for the representation of the city in Parliament a young fellow-citizen of high education and of brilliant talents, a man filled with the new ideas, who scorned family compacts, hole-and-corner cabals, and the dictation either of county squires or city pettifoggers,—Mr. Philip Colston, until lately an inmate of the house of Mr. Counsellor Colston, who had just been proposed as one of the candidates for the vacant seat.

The announcement was received with cries of angry remonstrance from the friends of Mr. Counsellor Colston, shrieks of derisive laughter from the supporters of the Tory candidate, and wild cheering from those who filled the floor of the court and the back galleries. Probably the large majority of those who filled the court were enthusiastic votaries of the principles represented by the Young Ireland party; and to them Philip Colston was a young hero, patriot, and orator. As most of these persons, however, were not qualified according to the existing laws to have votes at a Parliamentary election, their demonstrations of favouritism need have given little concern to either of the rival candidates. Counsellor Colston, however, turned pale and livid, and glared around the court at those who were cheering for his nephew, and, indeed, had some difficulty in keeping his anger under becoming control; for the exasperating idea came into his mind when he heard Mr. O'Flynn's announcement that the whole thing was a farce got up with his nephew's consent for the purpose of humiliating him, the learned counsellor, by the exposure of the family quarrel. He soon felt convinced that he was mistaken, for, like a trained advocate who never relaxes in his observation of judge and jury and witnesses during whatever passing excitement, he kept studying the

owd in front of him; and he saw that Philip Colston ad sprung to his feet with an expression of surprise nd anger on his face, and was evidently about to utter ome protest, when he was drawn down to his seat gain and restored to quietude by the arms and the influence of Mr. Conrad. The moment happily came in lue course when the presiding officer asked whether any other elector had a candidate to propose, and, receiving no reply, made it known to the crowd that the time had now arrived for the nominated candidates to address themselves to the meeting.

That was a very trying time for Phil Colston and Mr. Conrad. The Conservative candidate and Counsellor Colston delivered their speeches without abating a sentence, no matter how noisy the interruptions might be. The Conservative candidate had carefully prepared his oration and committed it to memory; but after a few sentences he abandoned all hope of being able to make himself heard by those whom it would be a paradox to call his audience, or even by the reporters who occupied seats in front and below the bench. He was quite determined to deliver his speech, no matter whether anybody heard it or not; and he went through every sentence of it with a sort of dogged good humour which only stimulated his political opponents to renewed shouts of impatience or bursts of laughter. At last, however, the speech came to an end; and then Counsellor Colston had his chance. Now the learned counsellor could have addressed that meeting or any other ceremony for whatever length of time it might have been his object or his duty to occupy, and would never have found occasion to stop for a word or to amend the construction of a sentence. But Counsellor Colston only made speeches when and where there was some practical use in making them, and he did not care to waste his breath or strain his lungs for the sake of accomplishing a feat of unheard

recitation. He began his speech with the full confidence of obtaining, on the whole, a satisfactory hearing, because he well knew that he was a favourite orator with all classes of the community, and that even his political opponents would not like to miss the chance of listening to a speech from him, when speech-making of any kind had to be done. In this instance, however, he soon found that his confidence begotten of much previous experience had somewhat led him astray. From the moment he began his address he was received with angry shouts and vehement interruptions, not from his recognised political opponents, but from large numbers of persons having bare standing room on the floor of the court or seats in the farthest of the back benches, — from those, in fact, whom Counsellor Colston in his present mood would have described as the rabble, and among whom he felt certain there could not be half a dozen votes. By some of these disrespectful persons he was assailed with offensive questions, such as "Who turned his decent nephew out of doors?" "Who wants to be a judge and to hang all the patriots?" "Why don't you go and black the Lord Lieutenant's boots?" and other such irrelevant interrogatories.

The learned counsellor soon saw that with the temper of the noisy majority, or the noisy minority, as the case might be, it would be in vain his trying to capture the assembly by any display of eloquence. He rattled off a few sentences, making the best use he could of any moment of comparative quietude, and answering with promptness, vivacity, and good humour some of the interrupting questions which sought to throw him off his balance. He appealed to his fellow-citizens to remember the services he had always rendered to them in the promotion of every work which tended to their common interest; and he declared that, in the event of his being elected their representative, which event he pro-

fessed to regard as absolutely certain, he should be all the better able to work for the commercial and trading prosperity of the city in the future. He made no allusion whatever to the nomination of the third candidate; and, on the whole, he got through a trying duty with courage and cleverness, and contrived more than once to get a whole sentence delivered without interruption. It must be owned that he owed a part of his comparative success to the fact that many of his opponents in the crowd were anxious to hear whether he had anything to say about his nephew's candidature, and sometimes gave him a few minutes' patient hearing in the hope, destined to disappointment, that he was coming to that interesting question at last. When he resumed his seat, there was a deafening uproar of groaning and yelling. Then all of a sudden these hostile demonstrations changed into enthusiastic cheers; for Philip Colston had arisen from his seat, and was about to address the assembly.

The presiding officer blandly invited Philip to take his place on the bench with the other candidates; but Philip signified in a few words that he preferred to speak from the place where he was standing, just in front of the bench on which he had been seated. Philip was able from the first to command the silent attention of the whole meeting. One good reason for this was that the greater number of those who were likely to make a noise were his political admirers, and another was that almost everybody in the court was anxious to hear what the young man had to say under conditions so unexpected and so extraordinary. Philip had a fine, clear, musical voice, which penetrated easily into every part of the court; and there was something winning in the diffident and half apologetic manner and tone of his opening words. He began by declaring that the introduction of his name and the proposal of him as a candi-

date for the election had been done without consent or knowledge on his part, and were totally unexpected by him,— a declaration which was followed by a shrill cry of "Hear, hear!" from Mr. Myles O'Flynn. Then Phil went on to announce that under no conditions could he accept the nomination or consent to stand as a candidate for election to Parliament. He declared that in no case could he be induced to come forward as a rival candidate to the uncle who had so long been as a father to him, and from whom he had learned all that he knew of that profession by which he hoped to be able to make an honourable living. But then, he went on to say, even if that objection did not exist, he could not possibly consent to become a member of the English Parliament. "I have lost," he exclaimed, "all faith in an English Parliament, all hope from an English Parliament; and I believe that all Irishmen who sincerely love their country and who have read her history must feel as I do. Ireland's one great need is the right to govern herself; and that right, if it is to be won at all, must be won by other means than by speeches and votes in a foreign and hostile House of Commons,— an assembly composed of men who are chosen from the privileged classes, from the high-born and the rich, from the territorial magnates and the capitalists, the men who have no sympathy with the poor, the over-worked, and the oppressed of their own country, and who never did and never would listen to argument or appeal from the people of Ireland." Thereupon Philip resumed his seat amid tumultuous cheers, again and again renewed from his delighted admirers and sympathisers. It is only fair to say that the speech made a very favourable impression on many of those who had no sympathy whatever with Philip's political views, with many even of the Conservatives present, who felt convinced that the young man was taking a course which

must before long conduct him first to the felon's dock and then to the convict settlement. These men, however, admitted to their own minds that he had shown good taste and good feeling in the few words he had spoken concerning his uncle's candidature; and they thought of him as a fine, manly young fellow, who was far too good for the associates whom they saw around him. "As you had to do it, nothing could have been done better," Mr. Conrad whispered to Philip; and the words of praise went home to the young man's heart.

Late that evening Kathleen Fitzwilliam was seated at one of the windows of her city home, when she saw the street suddenly filled by a great crowd. The whole crowd kept cheering and shouting tumultuously; and there was multitudinous waving of hats, and there was a simultaneous acclamation every now and then of one name. Then Kathleen saw that the object of popular admiration was Philip Colston, and that he was carried on the shoulders of some of his admirers, and thus borne in triumph amid the enormous crowd which surrounded and followed him. A momentary doubt came into Kathleen's mind as to whether, after all, the hero of the popular demonstration, the darling of the applauding multitude, might not be a more picturesque and more romantic figure than even the young cavalry officer on his curvetting horse. "What luck Mononia has!" she thought. "How glad she will be to see him after this!" Throughout the whole day she had not once heard mention of the name of Maurice Desmond.

The election went its way in accordance with the formalities of the times. The learned Counsellor Colston was declared duly elected. His majority was but small, and there were moments during the polling when it had seemed possible that the Tory candidate might have the victory. Counsellor Colston was well satisfied, however; for he had never expected anything like a large majority,

and it was quite as well for his hopes of promotion that he should be seen to have made a gallant struggle and won, in spite of all opposition, the much disputed victory. Therefore, he was disposed to be well pleased with himself and with his friends; and he was even brought into a forgiving temper towards his nephew. He readily admitted that Philip had behaved on the nomination day with discretion and good feeling; and he began to hope that it might not be too late even yet to win the young fellow back to the path of loyalty and moderation, along the surface of which steady advancement might be made. So he sat down one evening, and wrote a long letter to Philip, in which he began by announcing himself as filled with a desire to hold out the olive branch. Counsellor Colston belonged to the class of speaker and writer who always uses the metaphor of the olive branch whenever any possible opportunity offers for its employment. He told Philip that they had both probably been hasty and somewhat wrong; and he assured his nephew that, if he, the nephew, would only quietly and gradually release himself from his present dangerous and harmful associations, there was no reason why he might not return to the old home and to his former place as the counsellor's nephew, pupil, and heir-expectant. The counsellor read this letter in the strictest confidence to several friends, each of whom he felt sure would promulgate its contents at the club and in dining-rooms during the next day or two. The letter was sent to Mr. Conrad's house, was received by Philip, and was read by him with kindly and grateful feelings.

"You cannot blame your uncle, as things are," said Mr. Conrad, to whom Philip showed the letter. "Your ways are not his: you look at life from totally different points of view. The whole problem of life is to him but a question of advancement at the bar. I fancy that a good many heroes and conquerors settled their life problems

for themselves on much the same sort of principle. You are the eccentric personage, my dear Phil: he is the well-ordered and respectable member of society, whom we are all called upon to respect. I don't see any actual reason why you should not go back to his house if you feel inclined."

"And I know what you would think of me," Phil replied, "if I did feel so inclined; and I know, also, that you are too true a friend of mine to let me follow such an inclination without some words of remonstrance."

"Yes, I daresay I should feel tempted to thrust in my advice if such an occasion had arisen," Mr. Conrad said with a smile. "I am not much of a man of the world any more than you. But I don't suppose my unworldly and injudicious advice is needed in this case."

"No, my dear old friend, it is not needed. Before I showed you my uncle's letter, my mind was already firmly made up as to the course I ought to take; and that course, I know, is just what you would have me follow. I cannot give up my national principles and desert the cause of my country at a time when its fortunes seem lowest down for the sake of becoming my uncle's heir. I shall write to him most gratefully,—I really do feel quite grateful to him,—but I shall put it to him plainly that, as I cannot renounce my political principles or my political associations, it is better for him, as well as for me, that our paths should remain apart for the future. When all is said and done, I think my uncle will not be very sorry that I have made up my mind to this decision. It would never do if Her Majesty's Attorney-general for Ireland had to begin his official career by prosecuting his nephew for treason-felony."

Mr. Conrad smiled, and shook the young man's hand with cordial pressure. No other word passed between them on the subject; and Philip went his way towards the cottage of the Desmonds, there to talk over the

events of the past few days with Mononia and her brother.

Perhaps we may assume, without unduly disparaging the strength of Counsellor Colston's family affections, that the learned counsellor was not altogether sorry when he read his nephew's letter. He was glad that Philip and he had not parted in downright anger; and he felt sure it would redound to his credit that he had held out the olive branch, and had offered to receive the young man back to his home and to what he described as his heart. But it would never do, at such a perilous time of politics, for one who had not yet obtained his highest place on the bench of justice, who was still only an aspirant and elected for the first time to Parliament, to have a nephew actually living under his roof who might at any moment be carried away from under that roof by an escort of police to take his trial as a rebel against Her Majesty. The learned counsellor's mind was therefore, on the whole, well at ease. He felt that he had done his best, and that things might have turned out much worse than they actually had done; and so he slept that night the sleep of the just and the prosperous.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### "TO MY BURIED RIFLE"

THE government seemed suddenly to be aroused to activity and vigour. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended throughout Ireland, proclamations were issued prohibiting the use or possession of arms by any one who could not produce authentic magisterial license, a search for arms was rigidly instituted by the authorities, and arrests were made all over those parts of the country where disturbances were anticipated, There certainly was no reason why any one should feel the least surprised at such action on the part of the government; for it was hardly to be expected that the authorities would give the Young Ireland movement ample time to prepare itself for an armed rebellion, and only begin to take active measures when the leaders of that movement had solemnly announced that they were quite ready to begin hostile operations. Phil Colston and Maurice Desmond had for a long time been trying to impress upon their friends and comrades the certainty that some day or other the government would suddenly put forth its strength, and would do its best to stamp out the national organisation.

Ardent and enthusiastic as Philip Colston was, he had a sound, clear brain and a capacity for leadership which, under other conditions, might have given him a commanding place in political organisation; and he knew perfectly well that the country was utterly unprepared for anything like a genuine armed rebellion. His brightest hope had been that a number of brave Irishmen should arise, no matter how poorly armed, and show themselves ready to die on the field for the liberty of their country. The sight of such a sacrifice would, he hoped, arouse the sympathy of the civilised world, and win for the

national movement the active support of some Continental power which was hostile to England. He knew perfectly well that the peasantry all over the south and west and midlands of Ireland were utterly untrained to the use of arms, even if they had the arms to use, and that most of them did not yet know that organisation was going on with the definite object of creating an armed rebellion. He had long been of opinion that the leaders of the new movement, the movement for actual rebellion, had shown their hands all too soon, and had made public proclamation of their intentions before providing the means for carrying the intentions out. He was still as firmly impressed as ever with the certainty that, if the Young Irelanders of the capital had risen to attempt the rescue of the convicted and sentenced leader, the occasion would have been most favourable for the policy of self-sacrifice in which he still believed, and might have roused the country to the only course which, according to his judgment, had any reasonable chance of ultimate success. He had already shaken off the mood of utter despondency which came on him as it had come on Maurice. He was happy in an elastic temperament, and, when the first shock of disappointment was over, with his thoughts and hopes turned at once to the question, What is to be done next? Two resolutions were firmly impressed upon his mind. The first was that the work on which the youth of the nation had set its heart must be attempted, and the other that, since the opportunity for a magnificent and finally profitable self-sacrifice had been lost, no further attempt must be made until the country was better prepared for such an enterprise. Had the opportunity been seized in Dublin, the mere fact that so many young Irishmen had shown themselves ready to die for their country's cause would, according to Phil's belief, have aroused the whole nation as nothing else could do, would have thrilled the hearts

and hopes of Irishmen all over the world, and perhaps have brought on that foreign intervention which seemed fairly among the possibilities of '48. "We have missed our grand opportunity," Phil said to himself. "We have let the tide at its flood pass by us: we must now take to a policy of preparation and of caution. All that we can do for the present is to make ourselves ready. The right time will come when we are prepared to make use of it; and, unless or until we are thus prepared, it cannot come at all or it will come in vain."

Philip was still enjoying the hospitality of Mr. Conrad. Indeed, Mr. Conrad had prevailed upon the young man to give him, for the present, some help in preparing his school work and in conducting his correspondence; and he had succeeded in convincing Philip that this co-operation was of great practical value to him. Philip was only too glad to be able to lend a hand in any way; and the undisturbed use of Mr. Conrad's study during school hours and the constant use of Mr. Conrad's library were of great advantage to Philip's literary work, which he was pursuing with increased energy. Mr. Conrad's advice was most helpful to him, both as regards his present work and his immediate prospects. The elder man and the younger both studied the situation coolly and composedly, not making too much of its dangers, not treating too lightly its difficulties. Philip is never likely to forget the benefit it was to him at that crisis in his career to have the counsel and the companionship of so sympathetic and so thoughtful a friend.

Philip had a small annual income secured for him by the investments which his uncle had made of such property as his father had left him. The young man expected soon to be called to the bar, where he thought he might fairly hope to make a position in time; and, in the mean while, during the long interval usually spent in writing for briefs, he hoped to be able to write for news-

papers and magazines, and thus make some addition to his very modest means. Philip had even formed some great but rather vague ideas in his mind of attempting a novel which might picture Irish life as he thought it ought to be pictured, and convince the world that the comic Paddy of the stage was not the complete and all-sufficing representation of the Irish Celt. He had thoroughly taken to heart the encouraging lesson which Thackeray had been teaching to all young literary people, —the lesson that the pursuit of literature requires no more capital to make a beginning than the possession of a quire of paper, an ink-bottle, and a pen. Even the amount to be invested in a typewriter, which might be considered as a necessary part of a young author's capital in our days, did not make part of the calculation then. Philip, therefore, had his quire of paper, his pens and his ink and his blotting pad; and he was steadily disciplining himself to be an author and to make money by literature. Meanwhile it need hardly be said that he was a frequent visitor at the cottage of the Desmonds; that he had evening walks with Mononia, and consulted her about all her doings and his projects; that Maurice and he were close companions; and that these three enjoyed their walks and their talks none the less, indeed all the more, because they were in constant expectation of some great national crisis, which might scatter all the personal plans and projects to the political winds.

During those busy days of politics, literature, and love, Philip found time to throw off a string of verses, which he published anonymously in a Dublin newspaper. The sudden measures which were taken by the authorities of Dublin Castle for the seizure of arms all over the country, and the punishment of those who were found to have arms in their possession without a license, compelled most of the Confederates to stow their weapons carefully away in some safe hiding-place. The hiding-

place often consisted of nothing more elaborate than a deep hole dug in some field, under cover of night, wherein the rifle was deposited, as carefully encased or wrapped up as might be, and over which the mould and the grass were replaced and trampled down. A piece of bog land was often thus converted into a temporary cemetery for the proscribed rifles, a portion of river-bank or seashore covered by every rising tide often did similar duty, and even a neighbouring churchyard was occasionally made the secret receptacle of occupants on whom the worms had little chance of feeding.

Philip and Maurice both knew well that it would not be of the slightest use for either of them to seek a magisterial license to carry arms; and, indeed, when the head of the house of Desmond himself had applied for such a license, he was promptly refused on the ground that many of his personal friends and associates were engaged in the work of propagating sedition, and that his own son was one of the recognised local champions of revolution. So there was nothing for it but to commit the weapons, for the time at all events, to the sheltering care of mother earth; and Philip and Maurice buried them darkly at dead of night, carved not a line, raised not a stone, but left them alone with their yet unearned glory. As the pair of friends walked homewards, the idea came into Philip's mind that the occasion might make a subject for a few lines of rhyme, half melancholy, half humorous, partly despondent, partly hopeful; and, when he turned in with Maurice for a rest and a talk in the cottage, he proclaimed his idea to Mononia and her brother, he got hold of pen and ink and paper, sat down, and threw off his verses just as they shaped themselves in his mind, hardly giving himself time to think over words or measure. As the verses were afterwards given to the public in the Dublin newspaper of which mention has been already made, we may

venture to reprint them without any infringement of the copyright laws.

"TO MY BURIED RIFLE."

Deep, deep in the earth you must lie, my old friend,
Though I once fondly hoped for a test of your worth.
But alas for our hopes! they are all at an end,
All gone like the smoke you so often sent forth.
Your barrel will soon grow all yellow with rust,—
That barrel whose radiance I used to admire;
But be not ashamed, though down in the dust:
'Twas not my old rifle, but we who hung fire.

Yet call us not cowards: the spirit was strong,
But famine our weakness too sorely had tried;
And our arms had been cramped by the shackles so long
They could only hang powerless down by our side.
It may have but needed one brave upward bound,—
Our limbs were too feeble to compass it then;
For you know that to lie very long on the ground
Corrodes the best metal in rifles or men.

Yet our masters, all crushed as we are, should beware!
They have tried us too long: we may rally at length.
There are wrongs that man's patience could never yet bear,
There are insults that change the slave's weakness to strength.
I know by experience your barrel is strong:
One might overcharge you with safety at first;
But, should he continue to try you too long,
Why, tough as you are, you'd infallibly burst!

A bright day is coming, old rifle of mine,
And trust me its morning erelong will have birth!
God never made nations in serfdom to pine,
Men never made rifles to lie in the earth.
The summons will come, we shall answer its call,
Prepared for our country to do or to die.
So till that bright moment, for you and for all,
Dear trusty old rifle, I bid you good-bye!

The poem, it is needless to say, found appreciation and sympathy. The audience, composed only of two, could

hardly be called critical. If Mr. Desmond had been there, he would probably have had a good many suggestions to make, and would have brought very clearly home to Philip's mind that in the poetic art he had yet much to learn from Byron and Moore, to say nothing of Horace. But it was still comparatively early in the summer night, and Mr. Desmond, who had been dining in the city, had not yet returned home; and so Philip was spared any severity of criticism. Mononia, indeed, showed her lack of that capacity for discouragement which some people hold to be the essence of all cultured criticism to such an extent that she actually remembered the music of an old Irish ballad which she declared would exactly suit the spirit and the measure of Philip's verses; and she called in the aid of her harp and her voice to illustrate her meaning. Phil Colston was not by any means a self-conceited young man, and he understood the poetic value of his verses quite as well probably as the most judicious critic could have estimated it for him; but all the same he was made as proud and happy by Mononia's praise and by her resolute attempt to blend his words with the Irish music as a minstrel of the olden days might have been when he received a garland from his royal patron.

After a few moments, Maurice discreetly left the lovers alone, having, as he explained, a letter or two to write which ought to be disposed of without further delay. Mononia and Philip received the explanation with benignity; and, as the night was soft and bright, they went out into the little garden bordering on the river. There was no moon; but the sky had not yet even deepened into the set colour of night, and the light of the stars was still faint.

"The peace of heaven seems over us in that sky," Mononia said in a quiet voice.

"Your presence and your influence are always like

that peace to me," said Philip. "With all these terrible troubles around me, in my own private life and outside it, with all the difficulties which seem to stand between you and me, Mononia, I cannot help feeling happy while you are with me."

"All that I could do to make you happy," Mononia replied, and she laid her hand upon Philip's arm, "could be but a poor return for the happiness you have given to me, for the happiness you are giving to me."

"But I think you have a braver spirit than I have, Mononia. When I leave you, when I set out a few minutes hence to walk home, I know I shall feel as if I had suddenly passed out of the peace of heaven into clouds and troubles again."

"But, dearest, you don't quite know what a vain woman I am. Yes, it is quite true,— I am positively proud and delighted to think that my presence can bring you happiness, and even, perhaps, to feel that you are not quite happy when I am not by your side."

"I sometimes get angry with myself," Philip declared, "and feel inclined to go to buffets with myself for my downright egotism and selfishness in marring your young life by allowing it to link itself, in this almost hopeless way, with such a life as mine."

"But is it hopeless?" Mononia urged sweetly. "The future seems to me all full of hope, for the mere reason that we love each other and that nothing can change our love. I feel as sure of your love for me, Philip, as I do of my love for you; and that makes all the world and the future for me. We are young, we can wait. Each has the other to live for until the time when our lives shall unite. I have my fair share of troubles, as you know; but for all that my life is intensely happy because of you."

"We shall always remember this evening. We shall look back upon it as one of our memorable evenings.

We shall dedicate this evening to my buried rifle. I wonder when that rifle is likely to be dug up again?"

"There are anxious moments with me," Mononia said with a melancholy smile, "when I could almost find it in my heart to wish that the dear old rifle might always lie there buried in the kindly, peaceful earth. I am not a coward, Philip, and you know that; but a woman is always anxious and tremulous when she thinks there is danger for those whom she loves, and, when I think sometimes of the danger that may be waiting you,—and waiting Maurice,—I am sorely tempted to wish that the struggle might be put off during our time. These are feeble moments, I know, and I would not make the confession to any one but you; and, if the worst came, I would not—you know I would not—hold you back, or Maurice, from the worst danger in Ireland's cause. But I sometimes think that the real moment has not come, and will not come in our generation; and I draw womanish comfort from the feeling that those I love are safe."

"I know you too well, Mononia, not to know that, if the danger were really at hand, if the moment had come, you would be the bravest to encourage me to go on. I have often thought, when thinking of you, how much greater the courage of women is than the courage of men, because you have not the excitement of sharing the danger,—the excitement which makes men forget everything. When Maurice and I go forward, you will have to remain behind and think of us."

"Come, these are gloomy fancyings," Mononia said in a more cheerful tone; "but they put me into better spirits, Philip, because I know that, if the danger were really near, you would be sure to make nothing of it, and would try your best to keep my courage up."

By this time Maurice had written his letters; and there were no longer two, but three, in the garden.

## CHAPTER XIX

### "THEY HAVE CONSPIRED TOGETHER"

THAT same night Mr. Desmond was dining with one of his friends in the city, and Mr. Woodward was among the guests. The dinner party was small, and composed only of men. There were speeches delivered after the dinner; but there were no political toasts, for the host was a Conservative magistrate who had invited Mr. Desmond because of old acquaintanceship and good-natured pity for what he considered Mr. Desmond's come-down in the world, while Mr. Woodward, as we know, was an English Radical with a leaning towards Chartism, so that it would not have been very easy to find a common political platform on which to join in praise or censure. When the whole entertainment came to an end, Mr. Woodward offered to accompany Mr. Desmond on his way home; and, as the night was fine and warm, both gentlemen preferred to walk. Woodward's carriage was in waiting, but it was dismissed by common consent. The truth is that each man had, unknown to the other, a particular wish for a long and quiet walk which would give opportunities for an intimate conversation not likely to be obtained by a rapid drive in a rattling carriage.

The pair set out, therefore, on their way to Desmond's home, and they talked about the late election and things in general until they had got out of the more crowded streets; and then a pause set in, for each man had something in his mind which he wanted to bring out, and did not quite know how to set about the work of extraction. At last Woodward made a beginning.

"Do you know, Desmond, that I have been for a long time wanting a few words of talk with you about — well to come to the point — about your dear daughter."

Now this was exactly the point to which Mr. Desmond himself particularly wished to come. His mental difficulty had been that he did not quite know how to get at it without some compromise of his personal dignity. For a long time back Woodward had not spoken a word to him on the subject; and it would never do for the head of the house of Desmond to seem to be pressing his daughter on the attention of any suitor, however eligible. Woodward had now apparently removed every difficulty by introducing the subject himself, and Desmond felt that his dignity was quite in his hands.

"About my daughter, Woodward? You and I have surely been friends too long for you to have any hesitation in speaking your mind to me, even about my family affairs."

"Yes, I know that; and you have always been very kind to me, and were good enough to listen with favour to what I had to say on this subject not so many months ago. But now I suppose things are somewhat changed"—

"Between me and you, Woodward," said Desmond, graciously, "there has been no change of feeling, so far as I know."

"Of course not, of course not, as between you and me. But, then, as between Mononia,—I beg your pardon, I mean Miss Desmond,—as between Miss Desmond and me there has been, as you know, a change in our relations; and that is the very subject on which I want to exchange a few confidential words with you." Here Woodward came to a pause.

"You know, my dear Woodward," the head of the house of Desmond complacently observed, "that you had my entire approval and support in the proposal which you were kind enough to make to my daughter, and which I am sure she ought to have regarded as a high compliment."

Mr. Desmond was going to say a high honour; but he suddenly checked himself, remembering that it would never do to admit that a daughter of the house of Desmond could feel it a high honour to receive an offer of marriage from a man in business, however respectable and successful. He therefore quickly and delicately substituted the less compromising word "compliment."

"Well, you were very kind to me, my dear Desmond; and I'm sure you did the best you could for me. I never urged the matter again on Miss Desmond since the day when — you know — she gave me her answer."

"Perhaps you were too quickly discouraged. There was, I think, an old proverb which told us that in such cases nineteen nay-says make one grant."

"I don't put much faith in old proverbs: they don't apply to our new conditions; and, then, Miss Desmond is not by any means the sort of girl to whom an old proverb of that kind would be likely to apply. She is not like most other girls, and what might do for them would have no application to her."

"Yes, that is quite true," Desmond declared; "and I thank you for recognising it, Woodward. You seem to understand my daughter quite well, and that is only another reason why I should regret that events have not answered your expectations."

"I am coming to that. It may seem rather absurd of a man of my years, with a grown-up son, to talk as if he were a romantic young fellow in love for the first time; but the truth is, Desmond, that I have set my heart upon your daughter, and she makes me feel young even when I think of her. I don't want to give up all hope just yet. You see, Desmond, I was not a man easily beaten in anything I took up. I've been down more than once in business, but I always came to the top again; and it was so in other paths of life as well. Now I really think I should make a tolerably good husband

for Miss Desmond if she would have me. I have made a good lot of money; and, with a wife such as she would be, I should like to give up business, and go in for politics and Parliament and all that kind of thing. Miss Desmond has advanced opinions like my own on questions of human progress and civil equality; and, although I am an Englishman, I think I can quite appreciate her patriotic feelings towards her own country. I might be able to help your son forward in the world, and I think we should get on very well. What I wanted to talk about with you is this: I hear from all sorts of people that that young fellow, Phil Colston, is madly in love with her; but, of course, I have no means of knowing how she feels towards him.

"I have not consulted my daughter as to her feelings towards young Colston. She knew perfectly well that your proposal to her had my full sanction and approval, and I have not thought that it would be becoming of me to ask for a confidence which was not freely offered as the voluntary tribute of filial affections." Mr. Desmond, it may be observed, had been drinking just enough champagne and port at his dinner, and whisky punch after it, to make him a little more rotund in his eloquence than he might have been at an earlier hour of the day. Most elderly gentlemen were observed to be somewhat eloquent after dinner in those times; and it is only fair to observe that Mr. Desmond, during his walk with Woodward, had his wits very well about him.

"Of course, one can't expect young women to let out all their feelings to their fathers," Woodward said hastily. "But I thought perhaps you might have known, in one way or another, whether your daughter has really set her heart on this young fellow. I should like to know, too, if you think he is worthy of her; but that is another matter. The first thing I am anxious to know is whether she is really in love with him or

whether it is only a girl's passing fancy for a clever young fellow with the gift of the gab. If I were convinced that she has really set her heart upon him, why, then, Desmond, I think the most honourable and becoming course for me to take would be to take myself out of the way, and leave a true and high-minded and clever girl to go where her heart leads her."

"I have always heard," Mr. Desmond said, "that it is very hard even for a girl herself to distinguish at all times between a strong passing fancy and a real lasting love. I think the classic poets give us good warrant for entertaining such a theory. What does Ovid say"—

"I don't think I much care what Ovid said—excuse me for interrupting you. What I mean to say, and, though I am not so great a man as Ovid, that is more to the point of our present talk, is just this: I have so strong a feeling for your daughter that I really do believe at times I value her happiness more than I do my own, and that is saying a good deal for an ordinary mortal and man of business like me. Perhaps it is only another sign that I am getting to be what is politely called an elderly gentleman, Desmond; and perhaps, if I were twenty years younger, I should only think of securing the girl for my wife, whether it made her happy or not. Anyhow, that is the state of affairs with me; and, if I felt convinced that Miss Desmond had really set her heart on this young man, she should be troubled with no further pressure or persecution from me."

"Persecution! my dear Mr. Woodward, how can you use such a word? How can you think that the daughter of your old friend, a daughter of the house of Desmond, could regard as persecution the outspoken and chivalrous attentions of a man of honour and her father's friend."

"I am afraid young women are not always governed

in their choice of a lover by the fact that some admirer is their father's friend," Woodward observed gloomily. "At all events, you understand my meaning; and that is all we can get at for the present. What I want you to do for me is to find out, if you can,—your son could tell you, I daresay,—whether Miss Desmond is really in love with this young fellow or not. I like the young man well enough. I think he is clever and sincere; and, although he is certain to get into political trouble if he does not take care, yet I don't know that, if I had a daughter, I should be sorry to see her fix her affections on such a young man. I hear talk every day about the certainty of a warrant being issued for his arrest, and I know that I shall do all I can as a city magistrate to prevent any unfair dealing with the young fellow; for just at present some of your South Munster Justice Shallows are in such a fervour of loyalty and such a panic that they would commit Father Mathew to prison if a policeman only asked them to do it."

"Now it seems to me, my dear Woodward," said Mr. Desmond, blandly, "that you have yourself suggested the most hopeful—and, indeed, perhaps the only hopeful—course for a man in your position to pursue."

"I didn't know that I had suggested any course. I was only trying to get a suggestion from you."

"Nevertheless, you have given the suggestion. Some things will happen, my dear Woodward, as Horace observes; but never mind what Horace says. We will leave him out for the present, as you don't seem to attach much value to the opinions of the classic poets"—

"Fact is, I don't know much about them," Woodward rather gruffly interposed.

"No, you have led a more active life; and you have something to show for it, my dear Woodward. But, to return to our subject, you have indeed given me, by your own words, an idea as to the course you ought to

pursue. Why not take the heroic policy of befriending this young fellow, showing your admiration for him, and playing the part of the generous and magnanimous rival? My knowledge of women is gathered, as you will easily imagine, rather from books, and more especially from the poets, than from actual observation; but, still, I have had some personal opportunities of studying the character of woman, and the result of my observation is that the generous and magnanimous part would tell best in a case like yours. My daughter is a somewhat romantic girl, and no doubt she is attracted by the picturesque figure which this young fellow plays in the new movement here. You don't, I presume, propose to rival him as a leader of that movement; but I think you might make a decided effect by showing yourself as his friend and benefactor, and protecting him, so far as you can, against his powerful enemies. The whole excitement will soon pass away, in all probability; and with every day the effect of the illusion which this young fellow creates will tend to diminish, and he may before long become in her eyes only a commonplace figure. Do you take my meaning, my dear Woodward?"

"Yes, I think I quite understand you. I think there is some clear good sense in your advice, and it shows me how kind and true a friend you are to me. Of course, if I thought Miss Desmond's heart was really set upon Philip Colston, I should stand aside, whatever pain it might cost me; but there cannot be any harm in my waiting and watching for the present, and seeing how things may turn out. It's not as if we were plotting anything against the young lady's happiness; and you are her father, and ought to be the best judge of what is for her good. Do you know, Desmond, that it almost goes against my conscience to discuss the matter in this way even with you, her father; and I have a sort of liking for the young fellow himself. But you and I both know

hat we are acting in our different ways only out of love or the young lady, and I am doing nothing worse than nerely giving her a chance of changing her mind. Then, on the whole, you encourage me, Desmond?"

"I am only encouraging you to play the generous and nagnanimous part which suits your nature, my dear fellow; and I frankly own to you that I cannot bear the idea of seeing my daughter throw herself away on a feather-headed young fellow, who is as likely as not to be relegated to a convict settlement before the year is out. *Macte virtute*, my dear Woodward. Go on in the way I have indicated, the way that your own generous heart had already suggested. Show yourself the friend and protector of this young man, let my daughter see that she can rely on you as his friend and protector, and trust to the propitious fates for the rest. I should back you to win in the end."

"You are very kind, you are very kind," said Woodward, hastily. "Of course, he has immense advantages over me in the eyes of a young lady; for he has youth, good looks, and talents, and seems to her, no doubt, like one of your Irish rebel heroes, another Lord Edward Fitzgerald or Robert Emmet or that sort of thing. Still, I shall hold on and do the best I can; and I am glad, my dear friend, we have had this talk together."

Then there was a moment's silence, for they both heard the voices of approaching pedestrians. It was as well that they had lapsed into silence in good time, for the approaching pedestrians were Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston. Maurice was accompanying Philip for part of his way back to the city. A few words of greeting were interchanged, and then the young men passed on. The elders walked on in silence until they had come near Desmond's cottage. Then Woodward suddenly came to a stand.

"Look here, my dear Desmond. People come and

talk to me about all sorts of things, you know; and I hear — do excuse my mentioning it — that you are in some temporary difficulty about a loan from some of these money-lending fellows, and that they are pressing you for payment. Now will you, like a dear fellow, just treat me as a friend? I am not a man who goes in much for pleasure in the ordinary way, and almost the only pleasure I can have is in doing something to help a friend. Now this matter would only be a small affair to me, I am sure; and you may as well let me pull you through it."

Desmond was about to say something, when Woodward stopped him.

"Just one word, first of all. Does Miss Desmond know anything of this?"

"Nothing as yet, but of course she must come to know it if these fellows come down on me."

"Yes, yes, I see, I see; but she knows nothing as yet."

"Nothing as yet," Desmond answered with a gasp.

"Nor Maurice?"

"Nor Maurice — as yet."

"And neither will ever know anything if the matter is quietly settled."

"Never know anything," Desmond murmured.

"All right. That is just what I wanted to be sure of. If she were to know, she might misunderstand my motive or think there was a want of delicacy on my part; but, as she can never know, what possible objection can you have to my helping you out of the trouble?"

Desmond seemed like a man choking with emotions for which he could not find expression. At last he said:—

"Dear friend, what can I say? Let us talk of this to-morrow." And he clasped Woodward's hand.

"All right. We'll talk of it to-morrow," Woodward replied; and he returned the friendly pressure.

Then the conspiring pair separated, and Woodward returned home by another road in order to avoid the chance of again meeting Maurice Desmond.

## CHAPTER XX

### "NOW COME I TO MY SISTER"

KATHLEEN FITZWILLIAM ran to the balcony of her city home one morning, with eager curiosity shining in her eyes. She had heard the clatter of cavalry in the street, and she did not want to lose any chance of a picturesque or stirring sight. So much had been going on of late in the city that Kathleen spent most of her days there, and did not always return to the seaside when evening set in. The sight she now saw fully justified her curiosity and her interest. An open carriage was passing by, and the carriage was surrounded by a body of cavalry under the command of Captain Jerningham. That in itself would have been a sight such as Kathleen could not afford to miss; but her interest was deepened when she glanced from the gallant officer, riding sword in hand along the street, to the carriage and its occupants. The carriage was Mr. Woodward's,— Kathleen knew it well,— and in it were seated Mr. Woodward and Philip Colston and an officer of the police; while a policeman of the rank and file sat on the box beside the coachman. Behind there came a considerable crowd, yelling and hooting; but it was still an early hour in the morning, and the city in general was not prepared for the procession now passing under Kathleen's windows. Kathleen realised the meaning of the whole performance at a glance. Philip Colston had been arrested as a political offender, under the recent powers given to the authorities of Dublin Castle; and Captain Jerningham with his cavalry had been called on to take charge of the prisoner and his captors alike, and to see that no lawless mob should interfere with the enforcement of justice.

Kathleen's first feeling, when she had thoroughly real-

ised the state of affairs, was one of disappointment. Maurice had not been arrested, she thought; and once again it was borne in upon her that Mononia had all the luck with her hero lover, who was so important a personage that the government could not venture to send him to prison without ordering the cavalry under Captain Jerningham's command to prevent a rescue by an enthusiastic population. She turned for a moment to admiration of Captain Jerningham and his drawn sword, and then she said to herself it was a brave act of Mr. Woodward's to give his carriage to the prisoner and sit openly beside him as his friend and protector in the face of day. Kathleen looked at Mr. Woodward with more interest than she had ever felt towards him before. She had hitherto only thought of him as a man who was believed to be very rich, and who was said to hold extraordinary opinions about the levelling of classes and the abolition of the House of Lords. The procession soon disappeared; and, when it vanished from her sight, Kathleen was still thinking of Mr. Woodward.

The scene which has just been described will serve well enough to illustrate the course which events had lately taken. The government had clearly determined either to stamp out the insurrectionary movement altogether or to force its leaders to try conclusions with the authorities and the army. A great number of arrests had been made all over the country; but the arrests were in most cases merely intended as a means of securing and imprisoning certain dangerous persons, who might be regarded as no longer dangerous and allowed to return to liberty without any formal trial when the rebellion, if there was to be a rebellion, should have been completely put down. Philip Colston was one of the first to be thus arrested, and the imposing presence of cavalry under Captain Jerningham had been thought necessary to overawe his sympathisers in the city and to

prevent any attempt at rescue. Mr. Woodward as a city magistrate had insisted on his right to accompany the prisoner, and convey him in his own carriage. The arrest, however, was made too suddenly and at too early an hour of the morning, to allow of its becoming known all over the city; and only a few, a comparatively small crowd, came to hear of it in time to follow the carriage, and to signify their sentiments by hootings and hisses for the soldiers and cheers for the prisoner and cries of "Long life to Mr. Woodward!"

Not long after, Maurice Desmond was arrested, and quietly conveyed, without any parade of cavalry, to the city jail in which Philip Colston had already been immured. Arrests were now becoming so common that they ceased to create much popular excitement. Mr. Woodward accompanied Maurice as he had accompanied Philip; and he made use of his magisterial authority to pay frequent visits to the prisoners and to see that they were not treated with any unnecessary hardship. Indeed, Mr. Woodward made himself so conspicuous by his exertions on behalf of the political prisoners, and so particularly disagreeable to the local authorities, as to cause a great deal of talk in the city. At the Conservative Club it was commonly remarked that, if that confounded fellow, Woodward, did not mind what he was about, he would get himself transferred before long from the bench of magistrates to a cell in the city jail. Woodward himself was only amused when he heard of such comments, and contemptuously observed that the authorities would take particularly good care to let an Englishman alone. Hardly a day passed in the court of the city magistrates but that Woodward got into some more or less animated argument about the issuing of warrants for arrests or the treatment of political prisoners. He was already becoming one of the most popular men in the city,—among the unenfranchised

residents, that is to say,— and he was becoming rather proud of his popularity. But he was still more proud of the position he felt sure he must have obtained in Mononia's estimation, and of the willingness which she showed to consult with him on subjects of deep and personal interest to her. Mr. Desmond was much pleased to observe that his daughter now welcomed Woodward's visits much more cordially than she had ever done before, but on other grounds Mr. Desmond was a disappointed man. He had fully expected to be arrested, and was even hoping for an escort of cavalry; and, as the days went by and found him still at large, he began to feel that the authorities were treating him with deliberate and designed contempt. This thought became, indeed, a sort of consolation to him; for he said to himself that the policy adopted towards him — the policy of letting him severely alone — was only adopted with the malignant and futile hope of taking away from his importance in the eyes of his fellow-citizens.

Then after a while came the climax, or perhaps it should rather be called the anti-climax, of the year's movement. This narrative does not profess to tell the political history of the year 1848 in Ireland. We are concerned only with that history in so far as it has to do with the private lives of the men and women who are pictured in these chapters. The attempt to start an armed insurrection ended in collapse and a mere failure. The people were utterly unprepared for anything like a general rising, and in many parts of the country there came at the same time the news that the rising had been attempted and the news that the attempt had come to utter failure. The leaders who took part in the armed movement were made prisoners, and were kept in prison until the time should come for their arraignment and trial before a special commission of judges. Society in general made up its mind that the Irish rebellion had

come to an end, after the fashion of the Chartist movement in England, and that the world would hear no more of it.

It was a time of heavy trial for poor Mononia. Her days and evenings were passed, for the most part, in solitude; and even the outer aspect of life seemed to have changed for her. The river on which the summer sunshine still glowed all day looked to her like a cold wintry stream. The bright memories which used to float over it were now but dim and melancholy shadows from the realms of the ghosts. Her father spent most of his days in the city, at the club of which he was still a member or in the houses of some of his friends. Mononia almost always dined alone, and was regularly attended by the faithful Murtagh Ryan, who thought it his duty still to maintain the dignity of the family by attending as butler, even when his young mistress constituted the whole of the company. Murtagh followed the time-honoured fashion of the old Irish servant, and made frequent remarks to his mistress during his attendance at the dinner table. He gave her scraps of news or of gossip about the treatment of the political prisoners, about the most recent arrests, and about the state of the city and county generally. In Mononia's lonely condition these talks with Murtagh were a sort of relief to her. She fully appreciated the good old fellow's cordial sympathy, and could interchange ideas with him much more readily and easily than she could have done with an ordinary visitor. It was, on the whole, rather a relief to her than otherwise that her father seldom spent an evening with her. He had grown very censorious of late with regard to the manner in which the revolutionary movement had been conducted, and was fond of explaining, at considerable length, the precise course of action which ought to have been adopted in every instance, and certainly would have been adopted if he had been consulted in good time.

Mononia felt inclined to chafe at this sort of criticism, not because she did not see that many errors had been committed, but because it jarred on her feelings to hear such futile fault-findings, while her brother and her lover were alike manfully bearing their share of the penalty attaching to a premature movement for which they were not responsible. The sudden collapse of the attempt at an armed rising had not, it may be said, come upon Mononia as a complete surprise. From her long talks with Maurice and with Philip, she had become convinced that the sudden rising was entirely premature, and that in most parts of the country the people were not only utterly unprepared for armed rebellion, but did not even know that any armed movement was in immediate contemplation. But, although the collapse, when it came, was not a surprise to her, it yet brought with it deep feelings of sorrow and humiliation. First, and uppermost in her mind, was the thought that shame had fallen upon her country; that the outer world would come to the conclusion either that Ireland had no great national cause to fight for, or that her people had not the courage to fight for it. Mononia, it is needless to say, still believed as firmly as ever in the cause and in the people; but she deeply regretted and bitterly resented the fact that some excuse was now given to the outer world for the conclusion it might come to.

Then, again, there was a new and a peculiar depression attaching to Mononia's present troubles which she had never known before. In all former times of trial there was Maurice to turn to for sympathy and counsel; there was Philip, who, ever since they were mere boy and girl, had been a sharer in all the delights and the troubles of herself and her brother. And now, so far as that kind of sympathy and counsel were concerned, she was left absolutely alone. She sometimes wrote to her brother and to Philip, and Woodward took good care

that her letters should be duly conveyed; but even his influence could not enable them to reach Maurice and Philip without their being previously submitted to the inspection of the prison governor, and therefore Mononia wrote but short letters, containing scraps of home news, and with no outpouring of the heart's emotions. Except for her ordinary household duties,— now much lessened since the household had been so materially contracted,— she had little or nothing with which to occupy herself, — nothing which forced her attention away from the habitual gloom of the whole situation. She often tried to read, but found, with a kind of despair, that she was not able to fasten her mind on the words and the meaning of the author; and she put the book down sometimes with positive dismay at the thought that her mind was perhaps beginning to give way in her troubles and her loneliness. She tried the harp once or twice, but the very sound of its strings, and the memories that sound brought with it, only made the cottage seem more dismal than ever; and she sought refuge once again in the open air and in the unconcerned, unsympathetic, and serene presence of nature.

It may be said that Mononia must have known very well that there was little likelihood of Maurice and Philip being kept prisoners for long; and as the rebellious movement seemed to be at an end, and no actual charge had been preferred against either her brother or her lover, they would both, in all probability, soon be free to give her their companionship again. But the way of human nature, even when it shows itself in minds more sage, philosophic, and profound than the mind of our young heroine, is to find little consolation for the gloom and the loneliness of the present in the thought that it cannot last forever, and that better days may come in the undefined future. If Mononia had been compelled to explain, argue out, and justify

the present melancholy of her mood, she would no doubt readily have conceded that things might be a great deal worse, and that she ought to have borne her troubles with greater resignation; but all the same she was troubled, and all of the sages could not have charmed the melancholy of her spirit and converted it into cheerful resignation.

Mr. Woodward was acting very judiciously the part which he had adopted in concert with the head of the house of Desmond. He only came to see Mononia when he knew that an occasion had arisen which justified and called for his help. He made it clear to Mononia that he was not the man to obtrude his attentions upon her or to regard her present condition of trouble and loneliness as any excuse for his trying to resume the part of a lover. A thrill of unexpected delight went through him one day when he received a letter from Mononia telling him, in a few friendly lines, that she would be glad of an early visit from him, as she wished to consult him on a subject of much interest to her. The subject was, as Woodward fully expected it would turn out to be, the treatment of the political prisoners in the city jail, about which some disquieting paragraphs had appeared in one of the local newspapers. Woodward was not slow in paying the requested visit; and he assured the girl that he would take instant steps to find out whether the treatment of the prisoners was really as bad as the newspapers described it, and that, if it was, he would move heaven and earth to have the grievance remedied. Mononia thanked him from her very heart, and her eyes beamed gratitude upon him. This was the first time that Woodward had ever received a letter from Mononia asking for his counsel, and he felt proud of this distinct evidence of her increasing confidence in him. But he still held to the part he had marked out for himself,— the part of the willing friend, and not of the

pressing suitor. In truth, although Woodward had deliberately marked out this line of action as one most politic for the purpose which was still uppermost in his heart, it was really the part most congenial with his own nature and his own feelings of honour. Woodward had passed his life mainly in the pushing of business and the making of money. He had not studied many of the poets, and might have found some difficulty in getting through a romantic novel; but there was much of natural chivalry in him, and he had the feelings of a gentleman as thoroughly as any hero of romance could have them. He was already half ashamed of his private dealings with the elder Desmond, and tormented himself with doubts as to whether it was quite fair towards Mononia, whose proud spirit of independence he knew and admired, to buy off the father's creditors without the daughter's consent. He could only stifle these doubts by telling himself, again and again, that it would only add to Mononia's troubles if he were to let poor Desmond be driven utterly against the wall without putting forth a hand to save him.

Mononia was surprised, and at first not quite delighted, to receive a visit from Kathleen Fitzwilliam one day. Kathleen and she had not met lately; and Mononia had taken it for granted that Mr. Fitzwilliam as a steady-going Conservative, detesting the Young Ireland movement, had discouraged his daughter's keeping up an acquaintance with a family one member of which was a political prisoner. Besides, Mononia knew that Captain Jerningham and other officers from the barracks were frequent visitors at the house of the Fitzwilliams in town and country; and she did not think it likely that the friends of English officers would much care for any association with a family of rebels. Indeed, it must be said, too, that in her own troubles she had not of late given very much thought to the pretty and

vivacious Kathleen. The visit was paid in rather ceremonious fashion. Kathleen came in her carriage with her footmen, one of whom handed in her card to Murtagh Ryan, while his mistress remained in the carriage, waiting to know whether Miss Desmond was at home and whether she could see her. As Mononia came in from the garden and passed through the shabby little house to welcome her visitor, a certain sense of the ludicrous was aroused in her mind at the contrast formed by the gorgeousness of the arrival and the humbleness of the threshold which the visitor had to cross. But Kathleen was effusive in the affection and the tenderness of her greeting to Mononia; and Mononia could not help feeling a thrill of pleasurable sensation when this pretty girl, this favourite of fortune, threw her arms round her neck, and kissed her with sisterly warmth. Poor Mononia had been so much alone of late, and had been so completely severed from all opportunity of receiving womanly sympathy, that Kathleen's bright eyes seemed to bring sunshine with them and Kathleen's voice sounded like inspiring music. The girls, however, exchanged none but commonplace words of greeting until they were secluded in the little sitting-room which Mononia and Maurice had tried to adorn.

"You did not think I had forgotten you?" Kathleen began.

"The truth is," Mononia answered quite sincerely, "I have been so taken up with my own troubles lately that I have hardly thought of anything else. But, if I had stopped to think, I could not have thought that you had forgotten me. I might have thought, perhaps"—and here she paused.

"Yes, I know what you might have thought," Kathleen interposed, with looks of beaming sympathy. "You might have thought that my father did not like me to come to see you, and you would have been quite right.

You see, he has been thrown into a fever of loyalty by all that is going on in the country; and he is in such constant association with the officers from the garrison that I hear nothing but denunciations of the rebels and the Young Irelanders and everybody who shows the slightest toleration for them. I tried to argue with him again and again; but you know, my dear, that it is quite impossible to argue with men,—they never will listen to reason. So I took my courage in both hands, as we used to say in Paris; and I told him to-day that my mind was made up, and that I was positively determined to pay you a visit."

"Dear Kathleen, how kind of you, and how brave of you! And then did he consent?"

"Of course, he had to consent when he saw that I was determined to have my own way. I told him, too, that I must have the carriage, as if I were paying a grand visit of ceremony, so that nobody should say I was making any mystery about it, and was sneaking off secretly to see you, as if I were afraid of being seen myself by the neighbours. All the world shall know, I told him, that Kathleen Fitzwilliam is as true a friend as she ever was to her dear Mononia Desmond."

Mononia's heart was greatly touched by the words, and she welcomed with a special pleasure the new interpretation which they put on the mid-day visit in the stately carriage. She kissed Kathleen affectionately, and thought, with a secret penitence, that she had sometimes failed to appreciate the girl's genuine nature.

"How lonely you must feel, my dear Mononia, and none the less lonely because so many objects around you here must remind you every moment of your brother —and of Mr. Colston! But how proud you must feel, too! I cannot help thinking of that; and I sometimes even envy you for it."

"Do I look very proud?" Mononia asked with a

quiet smile. "Is there much for an Irish girl, with my strong national feeling and all that were my hopes, to be proud of just now?"

"But you must be proud of your brother and of Mr. Colston?"

"Yes, I am proud of the courage and self-sacrifice shown by my brother and by Philip Colston. I am proud, indeed. But, then, I always knew these qualities were in them; and the mere fact that they have proved themselves publicly is no new source of pride to me. The condition of our country just now is hardly one to be proud of. I am afraid that Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston are only the representatives of a lost cause,—for our time, at least."

This view of the subject had not presented itself to Kathleen. She had but little interest in abstractions, such as lost causes or national hopes or patriotic ideals. Her interest was always in persons; and she could not, for the moment, quite understand why Mononia should trouble herself over-much about the national cause, whatever the national cause might be, concerning which Kathleen's views were very vague. She could understand Mononia's feeling grief or anger at the imprisonment of her brother and her lover; and she could also understand why Mononia, regarding them as heroes and patriots, should feel proud of the imprisonment which thus gave publicly the hall-mark of government recognition to their claims. But she could not, in either case, understand how Mononia's feelings could wander away to the misty shadow-land of the national cause. Kathleen, however, was a quick-witted girl; and she endeavoured to accommodate herself as much as possible to her friend's way of looking at things.

"No cause," she said in a low voice, which seemed to be thrilling with emotion, "can be lost which has such young heroes as your brother and Philip Colston ready

to risk life and liberty for it. The dark hour will pass away, Mononia; and a bright day of triumph will come, and must come, for any cause which is championed by such men."

Mononia was much surprised and deeply touched by the fervour of Kathleen's looks and tone. She had not regarded Miss Fitzwilliam as one whose heart was in the national movement. She had thought of her as a bright, clever, romantic girl, who loved all the joys of life, and looked for most of those joys in drawing-rooms and ball-rooms; and now Kathleen was speaking as if her whole soul were in the success of the Irish national movement. Then the thought came into Mononia's mind that the cause, so far as Kathleen saw it, was embodied in the form of one man, and that that man was Mononia's brother Maurice. A rush of sympathy, a thrill of tender companionship, stirred Mononia's heart; and she felt that Kathleen and she were as sisters in hope, in trouble, and in love.

"Then you are one of us, Kathleen?" she said, taking the girl affectionately by the hand. "You have been won round to our side?" And she looked into Kathleen's eyes as if inviting her full confidence.

"I have been coming round that way for a long time, Mononia; and that is one reason why I have been longing to come and see you, and to talk with you about all these late events, for, as you know, I cannot talk of these things at home. My mother cares nothing about political events of any kind. She could not be induced to take the slightest interest in anything I could say about them; and my father is utterly opposed to the whole national movement, and would only scold me if I ventured to say a word of sympathy about any one, no matter who he might be, who takes any actual part in it. So I have no one to open my heart to but you, Mononia, on the subjects most dear to me."

"I am very much in the same state myself, Kathleen; for there is nobody near with whom I should really care to exchange any words that had genuine feeling in them. I am very much alone."

"Oh, but that is not the worst of it, to be alone," Kathleen exclaimed. "Ever so many times a day I find myself wishing to be alone and longing to be alone. I am so worried and pestered, Mononia dear, you cannot understand what a weariness it is."

There was a certain ostentatious self-consciousness in Kathleen's manner which made Mononia think that she did understand. She thought she could guess beforehand the revelation that was evidently coming.

"Tell me all about it, dear," she said encouragingly,— not indeed that she was particularly curious on the subject, but because she knew that some encouragement was expected from her.

"Oh, I am so teased and tormented!" the blushing Kathleen declared. "That irrepressible Captain Jerningham,— you know Captain Jerningham,— he will make love to me all day long; and he wants me to marry him, and he won't take a refusal, and he won't be put off. My father and mother are both on his side,— I don't think I ever knew them to agree about anything so thoroughly before,— and they keep telling me over and over again that he is heir to a fine property, and that he may succeed to a title, and that I ought to be out of my senses with joy at such a chance, and that I must be the maddest girl in the world to think of refusing it. My father seems as if he would like to turn me out of doors unless I follow his advice; and my mother gets sulky, and seems to say, as Lady Capulet does to Juliet, 'Do as thou wilt, for I have done with thee.'" Kathleen repeated the words with very effective and artistic expression, and looked up to Mononia as an actress might look up for the applause of the house.

"Then you don't really care about him?" Mononia asked sympathetically. "He always seems devoted to you, and I never quite knew" —

"Oh, well, yes, he is very much devoted to me; and I like him very much,—at least, I like him very much sometimes. He is very handsome, and dances delightfully, and he knows how to make love, too; and at one time I used to fancy that I might possibly come to like him in that way. And then, of course, it would be a very good thing for me in the worldly sense; and I daresay a good many of my girl friends would be very envious. But, then, it is so different; and my people can't understand me, and I can't tell them all that I feel."

"But if you tell your people that you can't love Captain Jerningham?"

"Oh, my father says that is all nonsense and affectation, and that girls always talk like that, and don't really know their own minds. Then I am afraid that, if I stand out too resolutely, they will want to know whether I care about anybody else. And there, just think, Mononia, what a trouble I should bring upon my unlucky little head!"

"Then you do care about any one else?" Mononia asked as demurely as if nothing in Kathleen's manner had ever suggested such a possibility.

"Dearest Mononia, how can you ask such a question, — you, of all women in the world? As if you did not know that my heart is imprisoned just as well as yours is in that city jail which I passed on my way here. Do you know — of course you don't know — that I stopped the carriage on the road, and that I got out and mounted the steep lane up to the top of the hill, and looked down into the prison yard to try if I could see Maurice and exchange signals with him. Have you ever tried to do that, Mononia dear?"

Mononia somehow felt less touched than perhaps she

ought to have been by these openings of the heart to her. She answered with a smile.

"No, Kathleen, I have never attempted anything of the kind. I am too well known in this quarter; and, if I were to be seen too often near the prison, it might perhaps put into the minds of the officials the idea that I was planning some sort of an attempt at a rescue. Of course, I can quite understand your sympathy with Maurice; but I did not know, dear Kathleen, how deeply it had gone."

"You never thought we really cared for each other?"

"Well, I never thought, at least I never knew, that you cared about him in that sort of way. I generally saw you surrounded with admirers, and I was not quite sure whether you had much heart left to give away."

"But did he never tell you so?"

"I don't suppose young men are given to pouring out confidences on such subjects to their sisters. Well, Murtagh?"

For at this moment the talk was interrupted by Murtagh Ryan, who put in his head at the door, and, being thus encouraged to speak, announced that Mr. Woodward was particularly anxious to say a few words to Miss Desmond, if it was not what Murtagh called "inconvainent" to that young lady. On hearing this announcement, Kathleen at once rose to her feet as if to go.

"You must not go," Mononia said. "I cannot afford to lose you just at present. Mr. Woodward is not a man of many words."

"But he may have something confidential to say to you," Kathleen pleaded,—"something that he would rather not say before a stranger like me." And she drew her skirts about her with her left hand as a preliminary to going.

"No, no, you must not go, indeed," Mononia said de-

cisively. "Mr. Woodward has only come, I am sure, to tell me something about Maurice and Philip Colston; and there can be nothing, Kathleen, which you are not perfectly free to hear, and you are not a stranger either to Mr Woodward or to me."

"Oh, thank you so much" Kathleen said fervently. And she sat down once more, while Mononia gave directions to Murtagh that Mr. Woodward was to be shown in at once.

## CHAPTER XXI

### "NOT THAT SORT OF GIRL"

MR. WOODWARD was well and even elegantly dressed, and wore a moss-rose in his button-hole. Mr. Woodward's private opinion was that a man who went in boldly for the abolition of aristocracy and privilege, and for the equal rights of all citizens, was bound, as a matter of policy, to dress with neatness and elegance, and to make it apparent to the public that his political and social opinions were not due to any want of care in his bringing up or to his ignorance of the ways of good society. He bowed gracefully to the ladies when he entered the room, and then took Mononia's extended hand. At first he seemed a little embarrassed by the presence of Miss Fitzwilliam; and Mononia, observing his embarrassment, thought it best to relieve him at once.

"You are very welcome, Mr. Woodward; and I always know that, when you come to see me, you have some comforting news to bring or you are anxious to be put into the way of making things easier for me or for some one dear to me. Now you can speak quite freely before Miss Fitzwilliam. She will feel an interest in all that interests me, and I can answer for it that she is not likely to reveal the secrets of our prison-house to any of the city authorities." Mononia assumed an air of cheerfulness and even of something like jocularity in the hope of dispelling the embarrassed solemnity which seemed about to settle on the company.

Mr. Woodward paused for a moment; but, as Mononia said no more and was evidently waiting for him to begin, the only course left for him was to tell his tale.

"Well," he said, "the truth is that I have got hold of some important news, which has to be told in the strict-

est confidence,— in the very strictest confidence." Here he glanced once again at Miss Fitzwilliam.

"It concerns the political prisoners?" Mononia asked.

"It concerns some of our friends,— the political prisoners. I thought my best course was to come and tell you the news at once, Miss Desmond, even before a hint of it is given to any of our friends in prison. You have a brave spirit and a thinking head, and you can tell me better than any one else could whether there would be any use in my carrying the news farther. If you say yes, I go on: if you say no,— positively no,— then I go no further; and I only ask Miss Fitzwilliam and you to keep what I tell you a perfect secret. Don't ask me how I came by the news which I have to communicate. There is no need for me to tell you that; and, indeed, you would hardly understand me if I tried to give you an explanation. All I ask of you is to take my story as true; and of you, Miss Desmond, to tell me whether the story is to be told for the last as well as for the first time by me in your presence, and in this apartment."

The apartment has already been described in these pages, and it was but a small room. Mr. Woodward, however, could not help throwing into his tone and manner, as he addressed the two girls who were, with himself, its only occupants, something of that rhetorical power with which he had been wont to move great gatherings of English Chartists.

Of course, Mononia requested Mr. Woodward to tell his story; and, of course, the two young women pledged themselves to any conditions of secrecy which he might think necessary. Then Mr. Woodward explained the full purpose of his visit. He had learned, from sources on which he could rely, that the government believed the rebellious movement to be at an end, as far as any

immediate danger was concerned, and were only anxious that the whole chapter of history should be consigned to forgetfulness as soon as possible. The government were determined to bring to trial and to condign punishment the leaders who had actually taken part in the armed rebellious attempt at an uprising; but they were not anxious to start an additional series of trials or to retain men in prison whose detention was no longer necessary for the maintenance of public peace.

He explained all this at considerable length, for, as we know, he had a certain admiration for his own power of making a statement; but the two young women were very anxious for him to come to the point, and only wanted to know what practical bearing the cogitations of the government might have on the lives of Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston. Mononia and Kathleen both listened, however, with exemplary attention; although, now and then, an involuntary rustle of Kathleen's dress might seem to express an impulse of impatience. The point of the story came at last. The government would be willing to set at liberty any of the prisoners at present detained without specific charge who would pledge themselves not to make use of their liberty for the purpose of organising any further rebellious movement, and whose pledge could be guaranteed as trustworthy by loyal and respectable friends.

"Now my idea," said Mr. Woodward, "is this. I do not see why Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston should not accept this offer on the part of the government,— which, between ourselves, seems to me rather a liberal offer,— and undertake that they will have nothing further to do with any attempt at an armed rebellion. What could be the use of any such attempt? There is not the slightest conceivable chance of its leading to anything but disaster and absurd humiliation. These young fellows, and all other young fellows, could go in for as much

agitation as they liked in the way of Radical reform and the extension of the suffrage, and human equality, and the rights of man, and all that sort of thing,—they could not go farther in that way than I, for one, should be prepared to go with them; and I daresay we should be able to harass this government and other governments a good deal more in that way, and to get much more done for the people, than by any attempts at rebellion, which only end like the Kennington Common or the Ballingarry Fair rebellions. Come now, Miss Desmond, what do you say to this? Don't you think your brother and Philip Colston might be prevailed upon to enter into an arrangement of this kind, and to promise that they will not take any further part in attempts at armed insurrection?"

Mr. Woodward looked anxiously at Mononia. Kathleen also looked anxiously at Mononia. Mononia shook her head, and Kathleen thereupon shook her head also.

"I can only speak for my brother," Mononia replied. "I cannot undertake to speak for Mr. Colston, although I think I know well enough what he would be likely to say. I am sure my brother would never accept his release on any such conditions, or indeed, I think, on any conditions at all." Mononia spoke in a low, firm voice, with her eyes fixed on the ground. There was a moment's silence. Woodward was waiting for Mononia to say something more. Kathleen was puzzled by the whole situation, and was waiting for some further light to be thrown upon it. Her first impression was that there was something strikingly heroic and dignified in the position of the two young men with whom the great English government were thus willing to enter into terms of treaty. Mononia's answer, however, seemed to suggest that there was another side to the question which Kathleen had not contemplated, and that the part of the true hero might be to refuse all terms of

arrangement and assume the high position of the irreconcilable.

"Every opinion of yours, Miss Desmond," Woodward said, "must have my deepest attention and respect. You know your brother and you know Philip Colston better than I could possibly know them, and you have an influence over them which I could not pretend to have. If, upon second thoughts, you are really convinced that the overtures on the part of the government would not be received by our friends, then I see no use in carrying the matter farther."

"No, I do not say that," Mononia interposed. "I am only telling you what I think, and I could not in any case venture to speak for Mr. Colston. I think, Mr. Woodward, it would be better in every way that you should let our friends in prison know the nature of the offer which has been made to them; and, indeed, it seems to me only fair and right that they should know how deep and direct an interest you have taken in them and their position. These are not times when men of public influence are likely to go out of their way merely to help a young Irish political prisoner to his freedom, and I think it would be unfair to my brother and Mr. Colston if they were not allowed to know what a friend they have had all this time in you."

"You will quite understand, Miss Desmond," Woodward said earnestly, "that I could never have made myself the mouthpiece of this or any other suggestion if I thought it contained any offer which derogated in any way the slightest degree from your brother's position as a patriotic lover of his country and as a man of honour and independence."

"I think I know you far too well, Mr. Woodward," Mononia answered with a smile that went to Woodward's heart, "not to know that no message could come from you which offered any position of humiliation to

my brother or my brother's friend. I am sure that, if you can get to see them, the right thing would be to tell them what you have just told us, and give them all your reasons for urging the acceptance of the chance, and then let them say for themselves what course they think it right to take. I shall not interpose any words of mine one way or the other. I know what I should say if I were in their place, and I think I know what they will say, but you had better find out that for yourself; and one thing I can say, and will say for myself and for them, is that we are all deeply grateful to you for the disinterested friendship you have shown to us at a time when friends in your position are few indeed, and that, happen what may, we shall not forget it." Then, obeying the impulse of her heart, she held out her hand to Woodward, who pressed it fervently.

"Well," he said, "the best thing I can do is to see these two young fellows at once, and say what I have to say and leave it for them to decide. You won't object, perhaps, Miss Desmond, if I put my own view of the case to them, and urge what arguments I can."

"No, no, I don't object in the least. I think it is only right that you, who have taken so much interest in them, should be left free to set your own views clearly before them."

"The looker on from the outside," Woodward said, "is sometimes a better judge of the game than those who are actually playing it."

"Yes," Mononia replied quietly, "when it is only a question of playing a game."

"But this is a game, after all: you want to find the best means of beating the government."

"But don't you see, what the government asks us to do is to pledge ourselves to give up the game altogether?"

"Well, well, you have turned my own metaphor

against me; and I confess you have had the best of that game, Miss Desmond. But you don't object to my trying my arguments on your brother and Phil Colston?"

"No, I don't object in the least. I want you to say to them everything you think ought to be said; and you may tell them, if you will, that I asked you to do so."

"Because you feel sure they will never consent?"

"I shall be surprised if they do consent; but, if they do, Mr. Woodward, it is for them to judge and decide, and not for me. I suppose a woman is generally too apt to be governed by instincts and feelings rather than by judgment,— at least, I've often been told so."

"A good many men I know would be much the better for some of your courage and your judgment," Woodward said; and then he rose as if to take his leave.

"You will let me know — when there is anything to be told," Mononia asked.

"You shall know at once. You may rely on me."

"I do rely on you," Mononia said emphatically, "and ever shall."

Then Woodward felt that the interview was over, and he was not ill-satisfied with its result. The glance in Mononia's eyes, the tone of her voice, and the touch of her hand, as she assured him of her reliance on him, filled his heart with hope as he went his way. At the same time he could not help feeling a certain pang of penitence as he thought of one word which Mononia had used during their conversation. She had spoken of disinterested friendship. He well knew that it was not disinterested. He well knew that, whatever sympathy he might have with her imprisoned brother, his first object in trying to serve the brother was to win the sister's favour, and to make his way, if possible, through her gratitude to her affections. Could she really believe that his friendship was disinterested? He com-

forted himself with the thought that, after all, he was not really deceiving her,—that she must know his love for her was the mainspring of all his efforts to lighten the troubles of her brother and to effect his release. "She must know it," he said to himself; and yet her last words were words of confidence and encouragement. Woodward felt almost as if it were in his heart to hope that Maurice Desmond and Phil Colston would take Mononia's views on the question to be submitted to them, and decide to remain in their prison, because their resolve on such a course would make him still the one only means of confidential communication between the brother and sister. Meanwhile the two girls in the cottage were talking anxiously over the news which Woodward had brought them.

"I do not see how they could possibly accept any such terms."

"Then you feel convinced, Mononia, that your brother and Mr. Colston will not accept the terms offered to them?"

"I do not see how they could possibly accept any such terms," Mononia said in a tone of melancholy decision. "They are pledged to the national cause through good and ill, and I do not see how they could possibly give any promise never to lend a helping hand to it again."

"But are not men of honour sometimes released on parole, even when an actual war is going on? I have read of such things in novels and plays and all sorts of books. The hero is a captive in the hands of his enemies, and they allow him to go free on a promise that he will not bear a hand in war again."

"Some heroes of romance," Mononia said with a smile, "prefer to remain prisoners rather than accept any such terms. Besides, I think, so far as my reading goes, that the parole only relates to the continuance of

the war then going on, while, according to Mr. Woodward, it would seem that our poor prisoners are to give their parole for ever and ever. I don't think they are likely to do that, Kathleen; but we may safely leave it to them to judge. They will know better than we."

"It is very hard on your brother to be kept in a horrible prison cell," Kathleen said in a tone of resentful argument, as if for the moment Mononia appeared to her to be the cause of Maurice's incarceration.

"There never yet was a good cause which had not its prisoners, dear Kathleen. I love Maurice as dearly as any sister could possibly love her brother,— her only brother; and I love him all the more because I know he would rather remain forever in prison than secure his freedom by any terms of ignoble compromise."

"But, then, you are such an heroic girl. You ought to have been another Joan of Arc, or some maid of Saragossa, or that Greek girl,— who was she? — that girl who did something great in a Greek poem or in a tragedy. I forget now what it was. You are like some of these women, you dear, heroic Mononia, but I am not that sort of girl; and, when I am fond of any one, I want him — or her — to be always with me and fond of me and making me happy. I hate to think of your brother in a common prison cell, as if he had committed a robbery or something of that kind; and it made me quite proud and glad to hear that the government had recognised his position and his importance, and were ready to come to terms with him for his release."

Mononia had not looked at the subject precisely in that light. Devoted as she was to her brother and her lover, it had never occurred to her to think whether their position of heroic dignity would have gained or lost by this or that movement on the part of the ruling powers. They were heroes to her because she knew them to be heroes and because she had faith, as they had, in the

rightfulness of their cause. So she answered somewhat vaguely: —

"I have sometimes thought, Kathleen, that, if there is nothing more to be done for the country,— if we are always to remain down in the dust as we are now,— I should like my brother to go to America, and make an honourable way in a land where there are no ruling classes, and where one state does not oppress another. I grow despondent, now and then, when I think what a hard struggle it will be for my brother even to make a living in this country, where advancement is only to be secured by selling one's soul for the favour of those who happen to be in power."

"But you don't want your brother to emigrate to America?" Kathleen asked, with open eyes of wonder. Kathleen's ideas of America were chiefly of a place to which Irish peasants went out in crowded emigrant ships,— a place, too, which was mainly peopled by negroes.

"But you could not possibly go out and live in America?" she asked almost breathlessly.

"I could not leave my father, Kathleen; and I do not know whether his health would allow him to undertake such a voyage. But I often think it would be better for Maurice to go. There seems no possible opening here for one who, like him, is devoted to the cause that is down. I could bear to see him sacrificed to the good of his country; but, if nothing is to be gained for Ireland by such sacrifices, then I fear that I am selfish enough to wish he were out of the trouble altogether, and safe in a land where his talents might win for him an honourable career."

"And what about Mr. Colston?" Kathleen asked demurely.

"About Mr. Colston? Well, I think I might say much the same about him. Of course, he will know

best how to act; but I must confess that it saddens me to think of his wasting his life here where only men who sell themselves, as his uncle has done, can have any chance of advancement."

"But tell me, Mononia, could you bear the separation from Mr. Colston?"

"I could wait," said Mononia, "and hope."

Then the talk languished. It seemed as if the fire of the conversation had died out, and left only ashes. The girls appeared no longer quite to understand each other. The revelations about Kathleen's feelings towards Maurice, which seemed on the point of coming just before the announcement of Mr. Woodward's visit, had not gone any further since his departure; and Mononia did not feel tempted to invite a completion of the confidence. After a while Kathleen rose to take leave; but before leaving she pressed Mononia to come and enjoy a drive with her somewhere along the riverside roads, and tried to make her promise to pay a visit of a few days to the home of the Fitzwilliams by the sea. Mononia could only answer that it would be impossible to leave her father, and that just at present she did not want to leave the house, as she could not tell how soon Mr. Woodward might return and bring her news from the prison. In fact, the visit had degenerated from what promised to be the confidential communication of sisters in love and trouble into an ordinary afternoon call.

As Kathleen sat in her carriage on her homeward way, she felt a complacent sense of relief at the thought that she had not gone quite too far when speaking to Mononia about her feelings for Maurice. If Maurice were simply to remain an ordinary prisoner until the government thought fit to release him, there was nothing very heroic to her about that sort of thing. By the time he came out of prison he would be well-nigh forgotten by every one. That was not at all

what Kathleen had contemplated in her more exalted moods. It would be ridiculous for a girl to throw herself away, all her chances and expectations, when there was nothing whatever to come of the sacrifice. Perhaps if at that moment she could have met Captain Jerningham riding at the head of his cavalry, and if it would have been consistent with his military duties to call a halt to his men while he rode up to the carriage and once again tendered his hand and heart to its pretty occupant, he might not have met with another refusal. But Captain Jerningham's military occupations were engaging him elsewhere just then, and Kathleen's carriage rolled along unenlivened by any such vision of splendour. Then she began to wonder within herself whether Mr. Woodward was not in love with Mononia, and whether that was not the reason why he was exerting himself so generously and heroically about Mononia's brother. Suppose Philip Colston were to go to America and Mr. Woodward were to have the field all to himself, would there be any chance for him? She did not think there would be any chance. Mononia was not that sort of a girl. She was just the sort of girl one reads of in novels,—the girl who gets it into her head that she is in love with one particular man, and can never care for any one else, no matter what happens. Kathleen really felt a sort of genuine and disinterested admiration for Mononia on that ground,—the kind of admiration she might have given to a nun or Trappist monk. But she never could be that kind of girl herself, she frankly admitted to her own soul. "I do really believe," she said to herself, "Mononia is capable of emigrating to America with Mr. Colston, if he only asks her." She thought it a hard case for Mr. Woodward, and Mr. Woodward was really a fine-looking man, who seemed to have a generous nature, and to be capable of noble devotion to a woman for whom he cared. Besides, he was said to be very rich;

and he certainly had a very fine house, and he travelled a great deal. To be sure, he had a growing-up son; but, then, some girls, she supposed, would not mind that.

Such thoughts beguiled her time as the carriage drove her home.

## CHAPTER XXII

### A LITTLE SUPPER AT HORGAN'S

OUT of one of the principal thoroughfares in the old city which is, for the most part, the scene of this story, there runs, or at least there ran, a narrow and darksome lane. The ordinary pedestrian, sauntering along the broad and handsome street and looking at the well-furnished and glittering shops, would probably never take the slightest notice of the darksome, narrow lane. Yet this lane had a peculiar interest for a certain proportion of the city's male population. Half down the lane stood a large house, which contained the Horgan supper-rooms,— the supper-rooms maintained and conducted by Mrs. Horgan, widow of the late proprietor, Mr. Thomas Horgan. Now the Horgan supper-rooms were one of the city's special institutions. Not to know the Horgan supper-rooms was, for a young man living in the city, not merely to argue, but to admit and confess himself, unknown. A stranger who had no friends in the city might pass weeks there, and never hear of these supper-rooms. Their existence was not made known to him by any form of public announcement. No advertisement ever appeared in the local papers to proclaim the merits of the *cuisine* of the Horgan supper-rooms. The house which contained them was a quiet, commonplace-looking building, without sign or blazon of any kind; and the stranger might have passed it half a dozen times without ever suspecting that it was a house of public entertainment. In fact, it was part of the dignity, part of the honour and glory, of Horgan's supper-rooms, that they held out no allurements whatever to the passer-by, and did not even remind him that they were willing to receive his visit and his custom. If you knew your world, you must know Horgan's supper-rooms; and, if you did

not, why, then, that was your affair altogether, and did not in any way concern Horgan's supper-rooms.

The suppers for which Horgan's rooms had a special reputation were oysters during the season and kidneys, chops, and steaks at all seasons. The food was understood to be perfection, and yet the cooking was not held to be the special distinction and charm of the place. Nobody was ever known to have gone there except at night; and it was not certain whether, if any daring explorer had ventured to enter the premises in the daylight, he would have found any one there to serve him with an oyster or a kidney. Indeed, there seemed some reason to believe that, if a mere stranger were thus to intrude at such a time on the quiet premises, he might have been mistaken for an especially audacious house-breaker, and handed over to the custody of the police. At night, however, the house was full of guests, although even then no blaze of lighted windows informed the outer public that revelry was going on; and there was no crush of carriages or other vehicles, for the good reason that the lane was too narrow to admit of any but pedestrian traffic. There were two or three large rooms in the house,—oyster saloons they would probably be called in our times,—and in each of them a numerous party could be entertained according to previous arrangements; but the special charm of the place consisted in the number and variety of its smaller rooms, where from two or three to half a dozen guests could be snugly and comfortably provided for.

The threshold of Horgan's supper-rooms was as rigid in its exclusion of women as was the shore of St. Kevin's Island. Let it be added, too, that the ways of Horgan's supper-rooms did not encourage heavy drinking. Horgan's had a reputation for good behaviour to maintain, and consistently maintained it. If a guest made it apparent that he had been unmistakably drinking more than was

good for him, he would be very likely to receive an intimation from those in charge of the house that for the future his room would be considered better than his company. The suppers were excellent, but not cheap. The wines and spirits were beyond reproach, but also rather beyond the means of the class of customers who would be likely to prefer quantity to quality. The principle of Horgan's was to go in for excellence rather than cheapness,—to give good value for the money, but also to require good money for the value. Many members of Father Mathew's temperance societies were visitors at Horgan's, because they were made just as welcome there, drinking only water or lemonade, as if they were calling for wines and spirits; and they were not likely to be shocked by the obtrusiveness of inebriety. No man's character was any the worse for his having been known to take his share of supper at Horgan's, and the most respectable father of a family would have felt no hesitation about mentioning in the domestic circle that he was acquainted with the flavour of Horgan's oysters.

One night in the waning autumn a little party of four occupied a small supper-room in this cheerful hostelry. There was a tempting display of oysters on the table, and excellent dry champagne was passing round. Mr. Woodward was the host, and his three companions were his son Willie and Philip Colston and Maurice Desmond. The little supper party was given as a sort of private celebration of the fact that Maurice and Phil were once again at liberty. Several weeks had passed since that visit of Mr. Woodward to the cottage of the Desmonds which was described in the last chapter. The two young men had absolutely refused to accept the conditions which Mr. Woodward had been enabled to offer them; and they had just been set at liberty merely for the reason that the authorities at Dublin Castle became convinced, at last, that all danger was

over, and did not care to be troubled any longer with the custody of political prisoners who could do no more harm outside the prison than in it. The leaders of an attempted uprising had been brought to trial, convicted, and sentenced to death; and, when the death sentence was commuted to a sentence of transportation for life, and the convicted rebels were sent out of the country, the official mind felt satisfied that law and order were perfectly safe once more, and that the untried offenders were not worth the trouble and expense of prison maintenance. This short explanation is quite long enough for the purpose, and will tell the reader how it came to pass that Maurice Desmond and Philip Colston were once again at large, and free to be the guests of Mr. Woodward at an oyster supper in the Horgan rooms.

"This champagne is really good," said Mr. Woodward. "I rather pride myself on my taste in champagne, and this is really very much better than one might expect to find in so unpretending a place."

Champagne, it should be said, was not a very common drink at Horgan's, where the company generally preferred either claret or whiskey punch. Mr. Woodward, however, although he had been long domesticated in the south of Ireland, had never become quite naturalised so far as whiskey punch was concerned; and his idea of festivity was chiefly associated with champagne. He was determined, nevertheless, to make it clear that he felt no narrow-minded British prejudice against the more familiar accompaniment of a genial evening in the south of Ireland.

"Do justice to the wine, boys," he said cheerily, "and don't be stinting with it. We can have the whiskey and the lemons and the hot water when the oysters are cleared away."

It may be freely admitted that both Maurice and Philip thoroughly appreciated the champagne.

There was much pleasant talk round the supper table, and many questions were asked and answered. Then, when the supper was finished, and the table cleared, and the waiter had disappeared for the time, the conversation became more serious.

"I am particularly anxious to know," Woodward said with the manner of one who settles down to confidential communication, "what you two fellows are going to do with yourselves. You may talk with perfect freedom before Willie. He is not a lad likely to let out any of our secrets."

"Catch me at it!" said Willie, emphatically,—"not if I know it, my dolly pals." Willie, it should be observed for the benefit of modern readers, was adopting a phrase commonly used in a novel then very popular, by Harrison Ainsworth.

"We don't mind trusting our lives to Willie," Maurice declared with a laugh. "They don't make informers out of fellows like him, even in these days. Now, then, Mr. Woodward, sole representative here of British tyranny, what disclosures do you want us to make?"

"Only to tell me what you propose to do with yourselves. Is Phil Colston going to settle down to practice at the Munster bar? And do you, Maurice, still intend to make a living in the quiet ways of literature? To come to the point, have you both made up your minds to renounce the hopeless business of rebellion, and settle down to the paths of peace?"

Philip, who had usually a good deal to say for himself, remained silent. Maurice replied, as if he felt it incumbent on him to do the talking for both.

"Rebellion seems to have given us up, for the present at all events; and in any case, although it might have provided us with the means of dying, I don't see how it could have furnished us with the means of living. So, if we intend to eat, drink, and live, Mr. Woodward, I sup-

pose we shall have to try to earn a living in some way; and, poor as my literary work may be, I am afraid it is about the only work that I can do."

"I don't see much chance of a literary career in a place like this," Woodward said. "Why don't you go to London and settle down, and try your fortune there? You see, there will be some chance for Phil Colston when he gets called to the bar, if he proposes to remain in Ireland. He could hardly expect to be raised to the bench as long as he held to his present political creed, and did not grovel before the ruling class; but he might get plenty of work to do at the bar for all that, and he has brains and eloquence enough to make the attorneys look after him. But yours is a very different case, Maurice, unless you, too, are inclined to try what you could do in the law courts."

"Seems rather funny, doesn't it," said Willie, "the idea of Maurice going over to the land of the tyrant Saxon, and making a living out of the tyrant on his own soil? Quite the fair thing, I daresay, and serves the old tyrant right for the self-exiled son of Erin to extract all he can get out of him; but it does seem an odd sort of idea, don't it?"

Maurice laughed, and said: "I must say that Willie's idea has occurred to me more than once, and I have often had serious doubts whether I should not find the very atmosphere of England unfriendly to me. I have always loved London, and all about London, from Chaucer's Pilgrims down to Sam Weller; but the feeling of antagonism is now so strong between my people and your people, Mr. Woodward, that I do not feel quite sure how I should get on in England."

"Stuff and nonsense!" Woodward exclaimed. "Your enemy is not the English people, but the English government; and the English government, as it is, may be set down as the enemy of the English people — that is,

the great majority of English people — just as much as it is the enemy of Ireland. I have been fighting all my life against English governments as much as you have, Maurice; and let there be no mistake on that point. You, an Irishman, will find yourself as happy in England, and as much at home there, as I have found myself in Ireland; and that is saying a great deal, I can tell you."

"I don't know how Mononia would like it," Maurice spoke thoughtfully. "I am not certain whether my father is not too old a tree for transplantation, as somebody said about Grattan, I think; and Mononia of course could not leave him."

"Tell you what," the saucy Willie interposed, "I have a good idea for settling that difficulty. Why not explain to Mr. Desmond that by going over to England he will be proving himself another Grattan. I should not at all wonder if you got his consent to the transplantation in that way."

"Hold your tongue, Willie," said Maurice; "and remember that little boys should be seldom seen and never heard, at least in the presence of their elders."

Mr. Woodward resumed the argument.

"Now let me tell you that I have many friends in England, some of them leading men among the advanced party; and I should be only too happy to give you introductions, and I am sure you would find their advice of much service. I think perhaps it would not be quite fair to Mr. Desmond to remove him from the place where he has passed his life and where all his friends are living, and to set him to begin, at his age, a new sort of life in a strange country. I am for his remaining here, with Miss Desmond to take care of him,— he has friends here who will help her to take care of him,— but it is quite a different thing with a young fellow like you, Maurice, who has to make a career for himself, and apparently no turn for anything but literature and journal-

ı to make it in. All this time, however, we have not ard a word from our friend Philip Colston. I think : should be glad to hear something of his views."

Philip slightly started at this direct appeal. He had en holding up a champagne glass, and gazing at it as it were the crystal ball in which the magician reads e present and the future. He abandoned his study, ıt the glass down, and said in a manner of some em-ırrassment: —

"Well, the truth is that, so far as I am concerned, I ) not see my way to leaving Ireland just yet. I do not ıite give up the national cause, even for our time. I )pe and believe still that there is something to be )ne."

"Of course there is something to be done," Mr. Wood-ard declared. "There is no such thing as a lost cause, ıless when the cause has no rightful claim to success. ut, my dear Philip, you have to go about your work in ıite a different way. You must see by this time the :ter impossibility of doing any good for your country y force of arms. Man alive, the English government ıve forces enough to crush a dozen rebellions such as )u could make, without getting one defeat in the open :ld. You must fight for your cause, as we English adicals are fighting for ours, by the weapons of argu-ent used in the open field of free debate. See what a liculous farce our English Chartists made of their ennington Common display. Every one with two ideas his head must have known that they could do nothing that way,—nothing except throw the cause back, and ıke it seem ridiculous in the eyes of unthinking people. )w we shall have to begin our fight all over again, t I tell you we shall do it in a different way; and we ıll carry to victory the cause of popular reform, not-:hstanding the Kennington Common blunder. You l have to do the same thing here. You are demand-

ing the restoration of the Irish Parliament; and you must work for it steadily by argument, and by persistent appeal to the reason and the sense of justice that are to be found among the English people, no matter how bad their governments may be or how grasping and unprincipled the privileged classes and the monopolists. You can work in that way, Phil Colston, as effectively as any one I know. That is your business in life, cut out for you; and you can help it along by your practice in the law courts as well as by your speeches on the platform. Come, don't you think there is something in what I am saying?"

"There is a great deal of good sense in what you are saying," Philip replied, still with the embarrassed manner of one who has something on his mind which he does not wish to let out; "and I quite admit the force of your arguments. Only I am afraid it is just a little too soon for us to try to settle down once again to the business of constitutional agitation. There would be a good deal of the farce in that sort of performance, I am afraid, just now."

"But what on earth else is there that you can do?" Woodward asked rather impatiently. "You have tried an armed rebellion for which you were not in the least prepared."

"For which we were not in the least prepared." Philip repeated the words in a low tone, and with much emphasis.

"Very well, then, what do you propose to do? You don't think you will be allowed to start making preparations for a new rebellion, with the eyes of the government on you, and that nobody will interfere to put a stop to your preparations? Do you think the government would be likely to let you fix a day for the next trial of strength, and to keep their troops in barracks until the appointed time? You can hardly expect them to fall in with your ideas of fair play in that sort of fashion."

"Hear me swear," Philip exclaimed with mock solemnity, "that I believe that would be expecting rather too much fair play, even from an English government composed of English Radicals. But come, a truce to solemn themes, as they say in tragedies. 'To-night, at least to-night, be gay,' and I call on Willie Woodward to give us a song."

Then a song was sung, and yet another; and the meeting became an ordinary supper party. Mr. Woodward saw clearly enough that Philip had something on his mind which he was not willing to disclose; and he made no further effort to carry on the discussion of political questions. Woodward was a man of regular habits, who went to bed early and rose early. So the convivial gathering broke up, after the interchange of congratulations on the release of Maurice and Phil from the city prison and their return to the society of their city friends. Willie Woodward took leave of the pair with a snatch of song, another extract from Harrison Ainsworth's novel, which made allusion to "the box of a stone jug,"— in other words, the cell of a prison. There was no getting Willie to take things seriously, even when the things themselves were serious; but Phil and Maurice clasped his hand none the less fervently, for they knew well he was a boy to stand by a pal to the last.

Philip accompanied Maurice on his homeward way. The two young men were smoking some of Horgan's excellent cigars. They walked in silence for a while. At length Maurice began:—

"I wish I could see my way, Phil, as well as you do."

"I don't see my way," was the rejoinder; "but one has sometimes in life to walk along a way when he can't see very far before him. There is no other way to tread at present, at least for me. I was very near letting something out to Woodward, but I stopped myself in time."

"It wouldn't have gone any farther with Woodward,

you may rely on that. He is as true as steel. If more Englishmen were like Woodward, there would be no need to think of an armed rebellion."

"Yes, I quite admit all that. Woodward is a thoroughly straightforward, manly fellow; and it was not from any want of trust in him that I was glad I had not made my meaning more clear. I was thinking only that it would not be right or fair to burden him with confidences which, as an Englishman, he ought not to be expected to share. Besides, he would certainly have felt bound to remonstrate and to offer advice; and remonstrance and advice would be quite thrown away on us—at least on me—just now. No sensible man of the world, and especially no Englishman, could possibly take my view of things. You remember what Carlyle said about Danton,—'He walked his own wild road, whither that led him.' Well, Maurice, old boy, I am not quite up to the measure of Danton, that is certain; but I have to walk my own wild road, whither that leads me."

"Whither it leads you, it shall lead me, too," Maurice said. "You may take that for granted. We have gone together too long, and been heart to heart too much, for any parting of the ways now."

"Yet, I confess, I can't help feeling some remorse of conscience about it. Our positions are so different, Maurice. I have nothing to lose,—at least, I don't mean that, but what I mean is that I have no family by whom I could be considered part of the light of life. I cannot flatter myself that my good old uncle would grieve greatly over anything that might happen to me. But your case is quite different. You have your father and your sister, who love you. I have neither father nor sister."

"Have you no one who loves you, no one whose life is bound up with yours?"

"No one whose life would not be all the happier, perhaps, after a while, if it were wholly separated from mine. But come, Maurice, don't talk to me in that sort of way, or you will make me feel like a coward; and you know as well as I do how little it would please the one I love if I were to turn coward even for her love."

"Have you talked to Mononia about this?"

"No, not yet,— not fully at least; but I am going to see her to-morrow evening, when I shall have fuller news of what is going on, and then I shall tell her all."

"If she tries to prevail on you not to walk the wild road?"

"You know as well as I she will do nothing of the kind. But I sometimes think, Maurice, that I should not be very sorry if she were to prevail on you."

"Why should it be right for her to prevail on me and not on you?"

"Well, it seems to me different, somehow. You are her brother, her only brother. Happen what will, she can never have any brother but you. She has a father to whom you are dear, and to whose life you are absolutely necessary. You and she have lived together always, and you are a part of her life. You represent three lives. I represent only one."

"Does Mr. Conrad know anything about this?" Maurice asked with a set endeavour to turn the conversation away from the painful, futile direction in which it was going.

"Yes, I have told him something about it. He is too great a friend of mine and yours for me to keep a secret from him."

"What does he say?'

"Well, he looks on the whole project as hopeless. It is not that he thinks too much of the risk or the possible sacrifice, only that he does not believe any good could come of it. You know him too well not to know

that he would give his sanction to any risk or to any sacrifice if the cause of Ireland could be served by it; and it is just there, and only there, that our minds cannot come together. I cannot convince him that after what has happened, after the terrible false step that has been made, the country can only prove that she has a cause and that she has a heart by taking a real risk and making a real sacrifice. I tell him that it is in the hands of Irishmen even yet to redeem the character of the country and to win back the respect of the world, and thereby to make the way for a complete success; but he only shakes his head, and tells me it will end in nothing. You know, he is not a man to persecute one with arguments when he sees that one's mind is made up. So we only ended as we began,— he keeping to his views and I to mine."

"When are you going to Dublin, Phil?"

"The day after to-morrow. I shall talk with Mononia to-morrow evening."

"Bear in mind, Phil, that you will be watched by police spies wherever you go."

"I shall easily manage to throw them off the scent. You see, I am not a personage of any great importance; and everybody knows I am going up to be called to the bar. While I am in Dublin, I shall take good care to spend my days in the Four Courts and my evenings at the theatre; and I shall have no meetings in lonely places with masked or disguised confederates. We shall do our conspiracy in the easiest and most off-hand way, dear boy; and the policeman on his beat may listen to our talk, and be none the wiser for what he hears. Well, good-night, old boy."

"Won't you come in for a few moments?" Maurice asked. They had now arrived at the door of the Desmond cottage.

"No, it is too late; and I must not keep dear old Con-

d up. I say, have you another of Horgan's cigars in our possession?"

"Here you are!" And Maurice produced another gar, which was duly lighted by Phil.

"Good-night, dear old boy," said Phil; and then the vo shook hands, and parted.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### PHILIP FOLLOWS HIS STAR

MONONIA and Philip Colston sat alone in that room of the Desmond cottage where we last saw Mononia. It was the evening of the day before Philip's departure for Dublin, a strange, wild October evening, with a sky which had been heavily clouded for the most part of the day, but from which a sudden rush of wind, almost storm-like in its vehemence, had driven away most of the cloud masses, and revealed an orange-red sunset, almost appalling in its glow and glare. Mononia, Maurice, and Philip had held a long talk together; and just now Maurice had discreetly left his sister and his friend alone.

"Then I have your consent to go on?" Philip asked.

"Yes, oh, yes, indeed, you have my consent to go on, since you think there is real hope that something may come of the venture. I can trust you, Philip; and I know you would not risk your life on any mere headlong enterprise which had not some hope to justify it. You know what you are to me, and I can trust you. You tell me to believe that there is hope, and I take your word for it; and I am not the woman to hold you back." She spoke, nevertheless, in a tone of the deepest melancholy; and there were tears in her eyes.

Philip took her right hand in his.

"I will put it to you, dearest, as plainly as any words of mine can do. Yes, I believe there is hope, and good hope, in this way. Our poor country is down now, down in the very dust, so far as the world's opinion can judge of her. If nothing is done, the whole civilised world will say, and say very naturally, that there can be no national cause if there be no cause that brave men will risk their lives for. The first duty of all Irishmen who really

love their country is to show that there is such a cause by showing that there are men in thousands who are ready to risk their lives and even to lay down their lives for it. That is our first duty; and that is, for the present, our only hope of proving that we have such a cause. That is the hope that animates me, Mononia; and is it not a hope worth risking and sacrificing something for?"

"It is, it is. I think I quite understand you, Philip. You want to show that there are in Ireland men enough, at least, ready to make a beginning, and that others will follow when these show the way."

"That is my firm faith, Mononia."

"And that is your hope?"

"That is my hope, indeed. Think it over, Mononia, and tell me if it is not enough to warrant the risk for me,—the sacrifice, perhaps, for both of us."

"There is no need for me to think it over any longer. I have thought it over, and I have made up my mind. You must go, Philip, where you feel that the cause of our country calls you. I am not selfish enough, or cowardly enough, to hold you back."

"You are a woman to make a hero of any man," he declared with passion and fervour.

"Well, I feel for my country in much the same way as I feel for my religion; and the dearer my love for any one, the more clearly do I see that I must not hold him back for any mere love of mine, or love of me, from going where his duty calls him. But, if I accept your sacrifice, Philip, you must accept mine."

"Your sacrifice, Mononia? Am I not accepting it? Do you think I do not understand only too well what it is?"

"I don't think you quite understand what I mean just now, dearest. You are willing to risk your life, and even, if needs be, to sacrifice your life for this cause; and

I firmly believe that it is your right to do so, and I bid you go on. My sacrifice is this,— that I give you up to the danger, knowing that you have a right to face it; and I want you to feel that I, too, have a right to make my sacrifice, and not to let your heart sicken and sadden over the grief that I may feel, but be glad that I see the right way and that we are heart to heart in this. That is how I want you to feel; and I don't want the flush and hope and pride of your enterprise to be saddened in any way by the thought that you have left a lamenting and despairing girl behind you. When you think of me" —

"When I think of you!"

"Well, while you are thinking of me,— at all times,— I want you to be cheered by the thought that my heart and my hopes go with you, that I am proud of you, and love you all the more, if that were possible, for what you are doing. Do you know, Philip, I have often thought that, if English men and women could only know how deeply Irish men and women can love their country, and how much they are willing to sacrifice for her, England might come to learn from us that we have a national cause well worthy of sympathy and admiration from every free people."

"I suppose it is the curse of conquest," Philip said sadly, "that it deadens the mind and heart to every principle and every feeling which tries to tell the conscience that conquest and gain are not man's highest glory. Well, well, I suppose every good cause must have its missionaries and its martyrs, before it can make any converts. Come what will, Mononia, we two understand each other; and though I go, and you remain behind, our hearts are together."

"In life or death," Mononia said quietly.

"In life or death; but I am afraid that, even should the worst come to the worst, the one left in life has a harder time of it than the one who goes to death."

"You must not think of that. I will not have you hink of that. I am prepared for anything; and, come vhat will, the memory of our love can never leave me. I will not have you despondent about me, Philip. I do believe that I am positively more hopeful than you. I have a firm faith that you will come back to me, and that I shall be more proud of you than ever, and that we shall one day say the time has come when we can give our lives to each other. Now tell me all about your plans. See how the whole western sky is lighted by that glorious sunset. A moment of happy omen, Philip, is it not, for the revealing of any project to be of help to this island of the west?"

There was a certain purposed exaggeration of dramatic effect in Mononia's appeal to the favouring omen. It was her wish to display a certain lightness and cheerfulness of spirit which was not hers, indeed, at such a moment. She did not want her lover to know how much the sacrifice was costing her, which, nevertheless, she was prepared to make.

Then Philip began to unfold and describe his plans to her, kindling more and more into enthusiasm and hopefulness as he went on. The plans need not be described here at any length or with minuteness of detail. It is enough to know that they were based on that idea which had long been in the mind of Philip, and many others like him,— the idea that a certain number of Irishmen, young men for the most part, must be enrolled and pledged for the purpose of proving that they were ready to do and die for Ireland. The conviction of Philip, and those who thought with him, was that, if the fire was once really kindled and seen to blaze, it would spread, like the beacon lights of old, from hill-top to hill-top, and that the whole country would be inspired by the patriotic flame. The one thing needed was to kindle the first fire, and this Philip and his friends proposed to do at

any risk or sacrifice to themselves. A number of men were to be enrolled — secretly, of course — in the cities, towns, and villages south of the Boyne; and on a given signal from Dublin the insurrection was to break out in all the appointed places on the same night. The insurgents were to provide themselves with arms by a sudden, simultaneous, daring plan of operation.

The Irish police at that time were splendidly armed; but each police barrack had, in the vast majority of cases, only a comparatively small number of men. The plan was that a large number of the insurgents should attack the police barracks in each place; that the number of assailants should be so great in proportion that anything like prolonged resistance on the part of the police should be impossible; and that the insurgents should thus obtain a large supply of excellent weapons — rifles and bayonets for the most part — at a very small cost of human life. Then the insurgent forces thus armed were to march in their different provinces towards some appointed centre where the national flag could be displayed, and the place occupied and held until further orders should come from the leaders of the movement in Dublin. Thus the game would be afoot, if one may use that somewhat undignified expression; and it would be for the nation to show how it could avail itself of the opportunity. The cherished hope of Philip Colston and his friends was that, if a few hundred brave fellows were to be sacrificed in this attempt to open the way for a general rising, the whole manhood of Irish nationalism would answer to the call, and the few hundred lives lost in the first attempt would be well spent for so splendid a promise of gain. The very first condition of success, as Philip and his friends believed and insisted, was that Irishmen should prove their readiness to die for their country, and that there must be no bloodless struggle this time, no abortive Ballingarry attack and dispersion,

ut a genuine stand-up fight. All this was to be pre-ared for by secret enrolling, and, as far as possible, by ecret training and drilling, but, above all things, by the ssurance that orders were to be implicitly obeyed, nd that men were to go to their death in immediate bedience to command.

Now, of course, it is obvious to every one that such a roject must have had, even under the most favourable ircumstances, many defects in it, and that any scheme epending for its success on the simultaneous action and o-operation of a number of confederates, scattered over whole country-side, must, in the very nature of things, e open to many a break-down. It is only justice to hilip and his confederates to say that they clearly fore-aw all these adverse chances and possibilities, and that hey did not for a moment suppose that their scheme ould be worked out with the precision and the certainty f some military arrangement devised by the command-r-in-chief at the London headquarters, and communi-ated by private instructions to all the barracks and en-campments throughout Great Britain and Ireland. Their conviction was that it was either this or nothing, that the attempt thus desperately conceived had its chief claim to consideration in the fact that it was desperate, that the counsels of desperation might, even at the last mo-ment, teach how to extract something from adverse fort-unes, while the counsels of ordinary prudence and moderation would mean but submission and shame. The intelligent reader of the present day must en-deavour to enter into the feelings of impassioned young Nationalists in 1848, after the collapse at Ballingarry, if he cares to do any justice to the Phil Colstons and Maurice Desmonds of those days.

Mononia sat and listened with absorbed interest while Philip explained the plans and poured out his ideas on them. He grew more and more eloquent as he went on,

until there seemed to be to her something almost lyrical in his enthusiasm. Mononia did not perhaps quite understand all the details of the enterprise; but she understood enough to follow the general purport of Phil's explanations, and did not trouble herself much to get any deeper into them, feeling, like a true woman, interest enough in her lover's talk if only because it came from her lover. During the whole of their talk Philip never made the slightest suggestion about a possible release of her from the engagement into which she had entered with him. He well knew that no such suggestion would be listened to by her, and it would not have come into his mind to make it. Nothing could be more clear and certain to him than the fact that they two were bound together for life or death, and that only death could come between them.

If he had been a soldier husband going out to the battle-field, he could not have felt the bond between them more strongly or more fondly; and he knew Mononia well enough to know that she felt as he did. So they both faced the future with steady hearts,— steady in the faith that nothing but death could come between them. When the time for parting came, they parted after one silent impassioned embrace.

Philip started for Dublin at an early hour the next morning. The journey from the south to the capital was partly the work of the mail-coach and partly of the railway. The mail-coach leaving the southern city rumbled across two counties before it reached the nearest station of the railway which led to Dublin, where the old world travelling gave way to the new. Philip was going up to the capital with the avowed object of obtaining his call to the Irish bar; and his journey, therefore, awakened no surprise or suspicion among those who knew him in the southern city or in the capital, but did not know of his secret plans. Mr. Conrad and

Maurice Desmond came to the office of the mail-coach to see him off. Farewells were interchanged; and then Phil mounted to his place on the box-seat beside the driver, and presently the guard blew his horn and the mail-coach rattled on its way, exactly as it had done for several generations before, and as it was soon to cease doing for evermore.

Mr. Conrad and Maurice looked wistfully after the departing coach.

"Philip is full of good hope," Mr. Conrad said. "I am sure he feels as if every tread of the horses was bringing him nearer to the moment when he is to bear a hand in the liberation of his country."

Mr. Conrad spoke sadly, almost pityingly. He had had such dreams himself when he was young. He, too, had striven to lend a hand in the liberation of his country. He had grown old now, and could no longer confound dreams with reality; but his heart could still sympathise with the young dreamer of the generous dream, and he was not one of the worldly wise with whom mere realities are the best of life.

"He is full of hope," Maurice said, as the two turned and walked away together. "I wish I could feel as he does; that is, I wish I could feel as much hope as he does. But, whatever way he goes, I go with him, Mr. Conrad. I've always looked up to him as my leader since we were boys, and I shall follow his lead now."

"If I were young, I should feel as you do; and, old as I am, I am not quite so old as not to know that the ways of the young are sometimes the true ways to go."

As they turned into one of the broad streets, a carriage was driving past them, in which a young lady was seated alone. The young lady was Kathleen Fitzwilliam; and, as she saw Maurice, she stopped the carriage and waved to him with her fan an invitation, or rather a command,

to him to come near. Mr. Conrad raised his hat, and went on his way. Maurice, of course, was instantly at the side of the carriage.

"I don't really know," Kathleen said, "whether I ought to be gracious and forgiving enough even to speak to you. You have been at home" — she hesitated over the words "at home," but probably did not want to use the harsh reality of the words "out of prison" — "for days and days, I believe; and yet you have never come near me or sent me a line to let me know. I think you ought to ask my forgiveness; and, if you do it very sincerely, perhaps I may be able to forgive."

"When a man has just been released from the city prison," Maurice said with a somewhat constrained smile, "he may be excused if he is not quite certain whether all his old acquaintances will be very anxious to recognise him."

"Old acquaintances! What a way of putting it! Are we old, you and I? and are we only acquaintances? When last we met, it did not seem to me that we were on terms of mere acquaintanceship."

"It did not seem so to me, either; and it does not seem so to me now. But the honest truth is, I did not know whether your people would care to see me any more; and I did not want to bring you into trouble."

"You were not always so scrupulous, Mr. Desmond, about the risk of bringing me into trouble with my people, as you call them. You could hardly have supposed, I think, that all our meetings in the woods and on the seashore were made with the express sanction of my people. But come now, I don't want to be angry with you after all that you must have gone through; and I don't want our first greeting after such an absence to be one of complaint on either side."

In good truth, Kathleen did not seem very angry with

him. Her eyes spoke unutterable good feeling and welcome; and her hand holding the fan was so near to his, which rested on the door of the carriage, that they might almost have touched.

"I knew we should meet," Maurice pleaded, his heart melting to tenderness under the glance of her eyes, and with her hand so near to his; "and I thought it better to wait for the chance than to try to see you at your own house. You don't need to be told how I longed to see you."

"Well, then, I suppose I must forgive you. It is always a woman's part to forgive,— don't they say so in the poems and novels? But I only give you a conditional pardon."

"Name your conditions," Maurice said gallantly. "I accept them beforehand."

"The conditions are that you are to come to see me this evening,— this very evening."

"At your house in town?"

"Yes, oh, yes, at our house in town. I am afraid we shall not see much more of the seaside for some time to come."

"But you are sure to have company," Maurice said despondently.

"Yes, we shall have company, that is quite certain; but you and I can contrive to have a few words together, for all that. Remember, I have your promise: you said you would accept my conditions."

"Yes, you have my promise; and you know I am only too glad to see you under any conditions."

"Then you are forgiven,— at least you shall be forgiven when you come, not before. But I must go on. It will not do to have all the people in the streets seeing me talking too long" —

"With one who has only just been released from the city prison."

"You are cruel to speak in that way," Kathleen said, touching his arm, not very harshly, with her fan; "but I forgive you that, too. You see I am in a forgiving mood. Good-bye until this evening."

Then the carriage drove on, and Maurice was free to begin his day's work in the office of the newspaper to which he was once more a regular contributor.

The sudden meeting with Kathleen had been, on the whole, a relief to the young man. He had felt a strong repugnance to the idea of paying a formal call at Kathleen's house, where he knew that his recent imprisonment must make him a very unwelcome visitor in the eyes of every one but Kathleen herself. He hesitated about writing to her, not feeling quite certain in his own mind whether he ought to write to her as a well-wishing acquaintance, as a recognised friend, or as a lover; and he still hoped that some chance meeting might save him from the necessity of making up his mind upon this rather delicate question. Now it may perhaps be taken for granted that the mere uncertainty on such a question settles it practically, in one sense at least. It might have been so in Maurice's case, where the uncertainty only existed with regard to the condition of his own mind. The most devoted lover might well pause and hesitate and consider and reconsider as to the style in which he ought to address the object of his love, if he felt any doubt as to the certainty of her receiving the letter unopened or as to the manner in which she would be likely to receive it if it came into her hands intact. But Maurice Desmond had not the slightest fear that a jealous parent might intercept and open a letter of his addressed to Kathleen; and, on the other hand, he had no reason to believe that Kathleen would feel in any way put out if he were to address her in the language of love. The doubts which he felt related entirely to his own condition of mind and heart, and there-

fore we may fairly assume that the existence of these doubts settled the question.

Maurice had had long opportunities of considering the subject during his time of imprisonment. He had begun by asking himself whether it would be possible for him to regard Kathleen as engaged to him by any bond of lovers' engagement, and whether it would not be utterly selfish and ignoble on his part to endeavour to bring such a girl to such an engagement.

He saw the probabilities of the future clearly enough so far as his own life was concerned. Supposing that he were released from prison without being brought to trial of any kind, and that the hour of rebellion had really passed away not to return in his time, he saw no prospect before him but that of many long years devoted to hard work as a journalist or a struggling author in Ireland or in London; and what sort of a life would that be for a girl like Kathleen to share,— a girl who had always known a luxurious home and had never learned, except through the medium of romance, what it was to stand in need of money? Would it be fair to ask a girl like Kathleen to make such a sacrifice? Was it not all but certain that she would afterwards repent it? Maurice had a reasonable share of good sense and critical observation in the composition of his character; and he had never, even in his most impassioned moments, invested his heroine with all the attributes of perfection in woman. Perhaps she charmed him all the more by some of her little imperfections, her weaknesses and her waywardnesses, her love of admiration and her delight in romantic mystery; but, the darker his own prospects grew, the less able did he feel to persuade himself that Kathleen was just the sort of girl to meet these prospects cheerfully by his side, or even the sort of girl who ought to be asked or expected thus to meet them.

Possibly from this illustration of the state of Maurice

Desmond's mind the reader will already have come to the conclusion that Maurice was no longer in love with Kathleen. When a man is really deeply and passionately in love with a girl, it will be held by most persons who have studied life or read romances that the young man thus possessed by love can think of nothing but his love, and that no life seems to him too bright or too dark to be shared, as a matter of course, by the object of his heart's devotion. It may be that Maurice, in his later moods, was only one other evidence of the truth of this general principle. Certainly, the longer he had been separated from Kathleen, the more clearly he had come to recognise the full reality of all the difficulties which must obstruct the path of life for Kathleen and for him if he were to persuade her that they might tread that path of life together.

There were moments when Maurice had actually thought that it might be his manful duty to write to Kathleen and tell her that the political prisoner who, if set free, might at any time be involved in a new effort at rebellion, possibly ending in death or in a convict settlement for life, and who, in any case, had nothing to offer her better than an existence of poverty and struggle, was not the kind of lover who had any right to offer her his love. Then he could not help remembering the bright hour when Kathleen and he had discoursed about the interpretation of the song, "A Place in thy Memory, Dearest," and the words of the lover who professed that he could never allow the loved one to share the cloud that was glooming on his pathway. He began to say to himself that he, after all, was acting just that part in its literal meaning; and he felt ashamed of the impulse, and put off writing his letter. But he knew that the decision must be put to his heart and to her heart sooner or later, and he waited with almost sickening anxiety for the chance that would bring about

a meeting between him and her again. Thus it was that he felt relieved when she stopped her carriage that morning and spoke to him, and obtained a promise from him to visit her at her house that evening.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### KATHLEEN'S SENSATION SCENE

THERE was a large gathering of friends that evening at Mrs. Fitzwilliam's residence in the city. It was the sort of gathering which would have been described in more modern days as an "At home." Among the men were several officers of the garrison in their uniforms, as was the custom of the time, and some few of the country gentry. Counsellor Colston was there, and had become the centre of an admiring circle, to whom he was laying down the law as to the proper course for the government to take in extinguishing the embers of the rebellion. And the learned counsellor, who was usually a good-natured sort of person, was especially severe in the policy which he indicated, because he was particularly anxious that no one should suspect him of any sympathy with the goings-on of his unmanageable nephew. Our old acquaintance, Captain Daniel Carey, was there, having been admitted as a visitor to the social gatherings of the Fitzwilliam's family since the occasion of his ball, at which Kathleen had been such a success, and for which, therefore, she regarded him with a feeling of gratitude.

There was a good deal of singing and piano playing; and one of the company, who had paid a short visit to Lisbon on some business connected with the fruit trade, had brought a guitar with him, and was delighting the assembled guests, or at least such of them as cared to listen to him, by his musical reminiscences of what he called the sunny south. Kathleen had sung but once, for there was as yet no one in the room whom she was particularly anxious to impress. Captain Jerningham had not yet arrived, and neither had Maurice Desmond. Captain Carey was somewhat out of humour,

because he had not been asked for an improvisation; and he had not been invited thus to distinguish himself because Mr. Fitzwilliam considered such performances decidedly vulgar. Captain Carey, therefore, relieved his mind and revenged himself by favouring a small group in a remote corner of the room with a low-toned imitation of the guitar player's serenade, and by comments on the guitar player himself.

"Rather too ridiculous, isn't it," he said, "just because a fellow like that has been for a few days in Lisbon, arranging for a cheap consignment of oranges, that he should go on twanging the guitar for us as if he were another Don Juan, or at least another Don Cleofas from *The Devil on Two Sticks*." By which, it may be well to explain to the modern reader, the gallant captain meant Le Sage's novel, *Le Diable Boiteux*.

Kathleen found the evening so dull thus far that she even went the length of paying some marked attention to her mother, who was seated languidly on a sofa and was giving herself, according to her wont, the airs of an invalid. Suddenly, however, Kathleen's face brightened; for Captain Jerningham was announced, and he came to pay his homage to the mistress of the house. For an ordinary occasion this arrival would have been enough to make the evening a complete success for Kathleen. She would have complacently or triumphantly exhibited Captain Jerningham as her captive, drawing him hither or despatching him thither, as the fancy took her; and this would have been enough to keep her going during the whole evening. Just now she had other ideas also in her pretty head. A curious spirit of bravado had taken possession of her the moment she caught sight of Maurice Desmond that morning; and nothing would satisfy her but that she must bring him to her evening party, and exhibit him also as her captive. She thought all day with positive delight of the sensation his appear-

ance would create among most of her guests. Only fancy the feelings of the two or three landlords from the county who were present, when a young rebel, just released from the city prison, should present himself as a guest under the same roof with them. Miss Fitzwilliam, as the reader has already come to know, had some little faults of her own which have been honestly set out in these pages; but that which we have come to call "snobism" was certainly not one of them. Only fancy also the feelings of some of the garrison officers when requested by Mistress Kathleen to make the acquaintance of one who a few days before had been a political prisoner.

Kathleen felt perfectly sure that everybody in the room would regard Maurice as her guest, would know very well that, if invited to the house at all, such a person could only have been invited in compliance with a caprice of hers, and that no one would for a moment suppose Mr. and Mrs. Fitzwilliam capable of entertaining a desire for such a presence in their social circle. All this would make Kathleen the heroine of the hour, and that was exactly the position which she most desired to hold. So far as Captain Jerningham was concerned, she felt sure that she could easily obtain his forgiveness for any pretty freak of hers; and just now she was in a humour which made it delightful to her to have a fresh chance of trying his temper and his patience. In her secret heart she relied on some sort of excuse to conciliate both her admirers, if it should be her humour to conciliate both of them. To Captain Jerningham she could say, "I was quite determined to show these self-conceited country squires and these purse-proud city merchants that I was not the girl to throw over an old friend like that simply because he had got into trouble, as so many young fellows have done, with the people who happen to be in authority at Dublin Castle, and who may be turned out of office before three months are

over." To Maurice Desmond she would have said, "I have brought you here, I exacted a promise from you to come here, in order that I might show to this assembled crowd, and through them to all the city, that Kathleen Fitzwilliam is not the girl to think less of a dear old friend because he has striven to serve his country, and has had to pay the penalty for his patriotic effort."

Kathleen thought she knew both her rival heroes thoroughly; and she therefore felt little uneasiness as to the consequences of her frolic, so far as either of these were concerned, and she cared nothing about its possible effect on the public opinion of her circle. She had got over any difficulty about the consent of her father and mother by the simple plan of obtaining Maurice's promise before consulting her parents on the subject; and even then she had only told them, peremptorily, that she had invited Maurice to come because she liked the dear young fellow, and because she wanted to show some of her stuck-up friends that, if they came to her house, they must be content to meet the people she invited there, and she told her father and mother that she was quite sure that they would let her have her way this time. So there was nothing for it but that Mr. and Mrs. Fitzwilliam should yield their reluctant consent, and that Kathleen should have her way this time, as she had it, indeed, at all other times. She well knew that her father was too great a stickler for the proprieties to make anything like a scene, no matter how unwelcome might be the guest whom his daughter's caprice intruded on him; and she knew that her mother was too languorous a woman to make a scene about anything short of the house taking fire. Even if her father and mother should receive Maurice with marked coldness, that would not much interfere with Kathleen's plans, and would only be another evidence in Maurice's eyes of the risk she must have run in proving her friend-

ship for him. Only one thing could have marred the success of Kathleen's project, and that would have been the failure of Maurice to make his appearance. That possibility, however, was put out of Kathleen's thoughts when Mr. Maurice Desmond was announced.

Kathleen thought she had never seen Maurice looking so handsome and so graceful. He was in faultless evening dress, according to the fashion of the times; and he wore the white waistcoat and slender gold chain, after the pattern of Monte Cristo, which had become the fashion of his own particular set. The hour was growing late; and Mrs. Fitzwilliam had long ceased to receive her guests ceremoniously at the door of the drawing room, and was now, as has been said, reclining on her sofa. This only made the entrance of Maurice all the more effective in what may be called the dramatic sense; for, after the loud announcement of his name, he had to make his way across the crowded room to the place where his languorous hostess sat enthroned, and everybody had time to study him as he passed. Kathleen happened just then to be still seated beside her mother; and when Mrs. Fitzwilliam had, with cold civility, extended three fingers to Maurice and murmured a faint word or two, supposed to convey a sort of conditional welcome, Kathleen rose from her seat and clasped his hand with a demonstrative fervour which seemed designed to challenge the attention and defy the criticism of the company in general. Then Kathleen bore the young man away in triumph, to introduce him to other guests and to pour out to him such confidences as she deemed it fitting to bestow.

"I knew you would come," she said in a tone of blended triumph and gratefulness.

"It was so kind and sweet of you to ask me," Maurice replied, "and so like you, too, to make me promise; for then I must come."

"Do you know why I was so particular about exacting a promise from you?"

"Yes, I think I know. You were afraid I might be unwilling to run the gauntlet of ill-natured criticism by coming to meet so many people who have so little of friendly feeling for me or for the cause in which I am mixed up, and who now, since I have been in prison, would probably think themselves polluted by my very touch."

"Yes, that is the reason why I exacted the promise from you."

Kathleen had drawn her guest into a recess from which a window looked upon the street. In this convenient place he and she had the advantage that they could not be surrounded or even taken in flank, and could observe the approach of any possible intruder, and desist in good time from an attitude of too much reciprocal confidence.

"But do you know why I asked you?"

"Do I know why you asked me? Well, I hope, to begin with, that it was because you wanted to see me."

"Yes, yes, of course I did. But, then, I could easily have arranged to see you without bringing you into this crowd. I might have asked you to call on me at some hour of the day when no one else was here, or we might have arranged for a chance meeting on one of the roads, might we not? We have done such things before, have we not?" Then she smiled bewitchingly at the young man.

"And I hope we shall do such things again," he said, looking inquiringly into her eyes. He was not yet quite sure whether the charm was fully over him still.

"I don't know," she answered thoughtfully, "whether those old days have not gone for ever. Everything is so changed since then."

"Have you changed?" Maurice asked.

"No, I have not changed,—at least, I don't think I have changed,—not in all ways, certainly. But things have changed around me; and things have changed with you, and must change more and more, I suppose, as the days go on. Stop! Here are some people coming to whom I want to introduce you; and, then, everybody is noticing us here. Will you take me into supper later on, and then we may have a chance? You see, I exact another promise. Be sure to look out for me at the right time. Oh, Counsellor Colston, I want to introduce to you Mr. Maurice Desmond, if you do not already know him."

"I have already the pleasure of knowing Mr. Maurice Desmond," Counsellor Colston said somewhat stiffly. But he relaxed into graciousness enough to hold out his hand to Maurice; for he had not yet received promotion to office of any kind, and he remembered that it would not be convenient for an advocate to make himself unpopular with any class of persons, even political prisoners, in times when so many unexpected things were coming to pass.

"I think you know an unlucky nephew of mine, Phil Colston," said the learned counsellor.

"We have been chums since we were boys, and just lately we have been chums in prison together."

"Oh! you young fellows don't know what you would be at. Lucky for you, you were not political prisoners under an Austrian or Russian government."

"Prisons are very much alike everywhere," said Maurice, "only we were prisoners against whom nobody seemed to have any charge to make."

"Lucky for you nobody made any," the counsellor replied, rather amused at what he would have called the cheek of the young fellow.

"Not very lucky, perhaps, to live under a government who can keep people in prison against whom nobody makes any charge," retorted Maurice.

"Come, come," Kathleen gracefully interposed, "I can't allow you two to take up any more time in good-humoured cut and thrust like this, while other people are waiting, I am sure most eagerly, for a talk with each of you. Lady Carolon, I want to introduce my friend Mr. Maurice Desmond to you."

Lady Carolon was a tall and elderly woman, the wife of a baronet and landed proprietor, with an estate not far from the city. She had a decided liking for handsome young men, and, not having paid any attention to politics, took it for granted that Mr. Maurice Desmond must be a most eligible person.

"Desmond is a fine old Irish name," her ladyship graciously observed.

"Mr. Desmond's father is head of the house of Desmond," Kathleen declared with bewildering blandness.

"Oh, indeed,— so delighted. Quite proud to have the honour of meeting a member of so distinguished a family. I was under the impression, somehow, that Lord Scarnock — the Earl of Scarnock, you know — was head of that house."

Kathleen and Maurice exchanged glances of perverse delight. Maurice was equal to the occasion.

"Our family was dispossessed," he said, "in the Cromwellian wars, and the estates were declared forfeit, and were given over to the Scarnocks."

"For whom, I believe, a new title was found," Kathleen added with a gravity becoming to the settlement of an important historical question.

"Here comes my husband," Lady Carolon said. "Mr. Desmond, let me introduce my husband, Sir Joseph Carolon. Joseph, this gentleman is Mr. Maurice Desmond, a member of the great old Desmond family."

Sir Joseph, a very portly and consequential-looking personage, bowed rather stiffly, and did not hold out his hand.

"Mr. Desmond and I have met already," he said with severe dignity. "I am one of the visiting justices of the city prison." Then, with a look of stern reproof to his wife, he led the astounded lady away.

"Come, come," said Maurice, intensely amused, "we really must not have any more of this. You are in a terribly mischievous humour this evening. If you carry this any further, it will only end in my being expelled from the house by your father's menials, as the writers of romance would call them."

"I am afraid I take an unholy delight in shocking these dull and self-conceited people," the malicious Kathleen declared with sincerity. "But I'm going to set you free now, until supper time. I shall look out for you then. Stay just a moment,— here is one of a different sort,— you have met Captain Jerningham often before."

For that gallant officer had just come up, and was not to be passed over. He had noticed some of Kathleen's recent performances, and, having a genuine sense of humour, was much amused and not the least put out by them. He held out his hand frankly to Maurice, and they exchanged a friendly clasp.

"Yes, yes, we are old friends," Captain Jerningham said. "Delighted to see you out again, Mr. Desmond; and I hope you won't get into trouble again. I am told our old colonel was quite alarmed when you were presented to him, and did not know how a distinguished officer in Her Majesty's service was to bear himself when confronted in social life with an avowed political rebel. But we younger fellows don't mind it, Mr. Desmond; and I told him I didn't suppose you had any intention of surrounding the house with a band of pikemen and transfixing us all on the spot."

And Captain Jerningham laughed good-humouredly, and showed his white teeth.

Kathleen meanwhile had disappeared, and Jerningham

and Maurice had some pleasant words of talk together. Maurice was really touched by the manly kindness of the young soldier, and could not help thinking it a pity that they two should have to be classed as enemies. He put the idea somehow into words which Captain Jerningham interpreted, and acknowledged with geniality and sympathy.

'Hope it may never come to a fight now," he said, "Things seem to be settling down, don't they? But, anyhow, there's no use in anticipating the time, if ever it is to come, when we may have to be enemies. We all are friends here to-night; and you know, Desmond, we soldiers don't always feel bound to set up the same sort of code that seems to belong to your justices of the peace and lawyers and sheriffs and fellows of that kind, and we don't feel bound to judge a man merely according to his political creed, whatever it may be. I only wish we could always be good friends, you Irish fellows and we English."

"I hope we may be some time," Maurice said earnestly.

"I am not much of a politician, and never was," Captain Jerningham declared; "but I am sure it would be much better for us all if we could manage to be good friends."

Then Captain Daniel Carey came up, having noticed the friendly manner in which Jerningham had received Maurice Desmond; and he, too, entered into conversation, and congratulated Maurice on his restoration to society. But the effect upon the company in general which had been created by Maurice's introduction did not seem to have much abated; and it seemed clear to Maurice that Kathleen's desire to be regarded as the heroine of what would now be called a sensational situation was only too likely to be gratified. His own feelings were very much complicated. He was amused, defiant,

inclined to be satirical, now vexed with himself because he had yielded to the temptation held out to him by Kathleen, now pleased to be the means of gratifying her in anything, and haunted all through by the growing conviction that nothing else than utter disappointment could come if he were to indulge in the hope of moulding her life into a companionship with his own.

Thoughts like these occupied Maurice's mind somewhat anxiously whenever he was allowed a chance of thinking, as the evening wore on. Supper time came; and he sought out Kathleen, and found her in a somewhat more serious mood than that which had seemed to possess her during the earlier part of the evening. The supper room was well filled, and there was not much chance of any interchange of ideas which the general company was not privileged to share. Then Kathleen led him back to the half secluded nook in the drawing-room which they had occupied earlier in the evening, and the drawing-room itself was now almost empty. Kathleen started the talk in a tone befitting what both thought the seriousness of the occasion.

"I have been told that you are leaving this place for ever," she said, "and that you are going to seek a career in London. Is that true?"

"I know nothing as yet," Maurice replied gloomily. "The future still seems uncertain before me. I suppose I shall leave this place. There is not much prospect here for a man like me. But nothing is settled."

"You have given up politics, I suppose?"

"Why do you suppose so, Kathleen?"

"Well, there is nothing to be done apparently in political life, except for people who make a business of it, like Counsellor Colston. The dream of a national uprising is all over, is it not?"

"If it was only a dream, the sooner it was all over, the better for us dreamers, I should think," Maurice

said sententiously. "But perhaps it was not merely a dream, after all."

"Oh, surely there can be no further hope, even among the most hopeful, after what has passed."

"Have you given up all hope for us?" Maurice asked with a smile that was not altogether gladsome.

"Well, of course, I know nothing. Girls have no judgment in such affairs. I was very hopeful, and very enthusiastic at one time, Maurice, as you know. You converted me and made me quite a rebel, for the time."

"For the time, yes; and now I suppose you are re-converted, and are a rebel no more."

"But you are not a rebel any longer, and you are thinking of going to London and settling down to the quiet ways of literature; and so I don't see what good there would be in my trying to hold up the rebel flag all alone. I should only be making myself an anachronism,—anachronism, is not that the word?"

"Anachronism is the word; and I suppose anachronism would be the thing, according to what we see all around us. But some of us have good hope that the old flag is only furled for the time, and may flutter in the breeze yet."

"Not in our time," Kathleen said with the air of one who delivers an oracle. "You are too good and too clever, Maurice, to waste any more of your life in persuing a phantom."

"I am afraid I have lost some of my life in pursuing a phantom," said Maurice, with a meaning in his voice which was not lost on Kathleen; "and the pursuit was very pleasant, as long as it lasted, but the hard business of life has to go on for some of us."

"We all expect great things of you," Kathleen answered benignantly. "We all believe in you, and wish for your success and happiness; and no one among all

your friends wishes you more success and happiness than I do."

"Good-bye," said Maurice, rising from his seat and holding out his hand.

"Good-bye. Must this be good-bye, are you going?"

"Yes, I am. It is growing late. I am going."

"But not for good?"

"For good, I hope,—not for evil."

"I mean, are you going away altogether? Shall I not see you again?"

"Some time, I hope," said Maurice, "and under happier auspices. Just now everything is unsettled, and I do not know when I may have to leave this place."

"But I shall hear from you. You can always write to me."

"I hope to write to you soon—a letter of congratulation."

Their eyes met for a moment, but not a word was spoken. There was evidently a clear understanding on both sides. Maurice knew that the time for parting, in every sense, had come; and he felt that it could not have found a scene or an occasion better suited to its accomplishment.

A few minutes later Kathleen was met by Captain Jerningham.

"Look here," he exclaimed as he caught her hand. "You are a real good girl, a rattling good girl. I saw through all your meaning in being so kind to that poor young fellow Desmond, and taking him about and forcing people to be civil to him. You wanted to show the poor chap that you could stand by a friend when he was in trouble; and by Jove, Kathleen, I love you all the better for it."

So Kathleen's sensation scene closed with an illustration of virtue rewarded.

## CHAPTER XXV

### MONONIA'S NEW TROUBLE

THE first news of Philip which his friends received from Dublin created a great sensation among all in the southern city who knew him, and many to whom, personally, he was unknown. The news was that the ruling authorities of the law had refused to admit Philip Colston to the Irish bar on the grounds that his political opinions and his recent imprisonment rendered him an unsuitable person for admission to practice as a barrister in the courts. It is no part of the scheme of this story to enter into any lengthened descriptions of the criticism and commentaries which this arbitrary decision called forth. The Tory newspapers generally approved of it and applauded it, inviting all loyal members of society, whatever their political opinions, to rejoice over the fact that there was still authority enough left in Ireland to maintain the traditional dignity of the bar, the sovereignty of the Crown, and the integrity of the empire. Some even of the journals which professed liberal opinions seemed reluctant to speak out freely on the subject, and only entered into a mild constitutional argument as to the danger which might be likely to arise from an incautious extension of such a precedent. Only the journals which were avowedly nationalistic in their sentiments censured and condemned the decision absolutely; and in those days of high-priced newspapers there were but few organs of public opinion, as the phrase went and still goes, which had anything to do with the opinion of the unprivileged majority.

To Philip himself the whole matter was one of comparatively small importance. He had no particular inclination just then to settle down to quiet practice at the Irish bar, even if the ruling powers had granted him

any opportunity of entering on such a career; and in his secret heart he was rather gratified than otherwise to find new evidence thus thrust upon him of the servile condition to which his country had been reduced. There was one other reason, too, which would have consoled him if he had needed consolation for the stigma thus put upon him. The event made him the hero of a public controversy which turned public attention entirely away from the real business of his stay in Dublin. He had become the central figure in a prolonged debate and dissertation on a great constitutional question, and the attention of the police authorities was not directed to the nature of his private occupations in his moments of leisure. The controversy soon died out, and by the time Phil Colston had returned to his native city the subject was almost wholly forgotten. If he had been a personage conspicuous and important enough to claim a place in history, it is quite possible that some of his historians might have set down his subsequent action as the direct outcome of his resentment at the manner in which his possible political career as an advocate had been thus suddenly blighted. The readers of this story know better. Phil Colston had timed his application for admission to the bar in order to supply a plausible reason for his journey to Dublin; and he regarded the wholly unexpected refusal of his application as a positive advantage, in so far as it diverted attention from the real object of his long stay in the capital.

Meantime the leaders of the movement in Dublin were noiselessly maturing their plans. The management of the work to be done in the southern counties was given principally into the hands of Philip Colston, and Maurice Desmond was to be one of his most important fellow-workers. The movement was to be secret altogether. A business of mysterious enrolments, of plans known only to the privileged few, and only allowed to

flow gradually and drop by drop among the many, from whom prompt obedience to orders and utter disregard of self were the qualities mainly to be expected. There was a positive hierarchy of officers, each knowing more and more of the plans, according to his rank and degree; and there were signs and passwords, and all the other characteristics of secret conspiracy. The most devotedly loyal student of the history of those days might, if he had got at any real knowledge of the times and the people, be willing, at least, to admit that such a confederacy with one definite purpose had the advantage of preventing sporadic attempts at outbreak here and there, which could only have ended in futile local struggles against armed authority and purposeless loss of life.

The openness of this conspiracy was its great security. It is not meant by this that the conspirators held open air meetings and passed resolutions pledging each other to the overthrow of the tyrant Saxon, or that they had public trainings and drillings such as used to be not uncommon before the passing of the new laws for the repression of all open and advised demonstrations against existing authority. The openness with which the conspiracy of confederacy was carried on consisted in the fact that it took care to associate itself with every legitimate gathering of men for any purpose whatever. The love of open-air sports, which existed at all times among Irish populations, has, at different periods of Ireland's history, been turned to account for the furtherance of some secret political organisation. The great hurling matches, so common in all parts of the country,— hurling has been described in one of Charles Lever's more recent novels as foot-ball with a stick,— were sure to be joined in by all the local members of the secret confederation. Given the knowledge of a few passwords, nothing could be more easy and more safe than to find out at a hurling match who were your allies and who

were not; and, also, what degree of intimacy with the secrets of the order each of the initiated had been privileged to reach. A great, hurling match brought together a number of persons from widely remote parishes; and any one who held what might be called an officer's rank in the confederacy could soon find out the men who might be intrusted with the transmission of secret orders, and how far he might go with each such person in communicating the purposes of the leaders. The confederate officer would begin, for instance, with some casual remark to the man who happened to be next him at the moment,— some observation of the simplest character, referring, perhaps, to the state of the weather, but, nevertheless, put into a form which constituted one of the elementary or test signals. If the man to whom this observation was made, seemed to be carelessly addressed, happened to be one of the initiated, he would reply with some words equally commonplace in themselves, but still constituting the answer set out by the secret authority. Then the confederate officer, having ascertained that the man he addressed had, at all events, been admitted within the outer circle of the organisation, followed up his first remark with another, also insignificant in itself, but which drew out an answer, making it manifest that the other man had been admitted to a higher degree of intimacy with the secrets of the confederacy. Thus it became easy to know how far the officer might go in the revelation of important news or the transmission of momentous messages.

Every secret political association works, of course, by some such means as these; and centuries of unmitigated political oppression and repression in Ireland had made the people peculiarly ready for any manner of combination against existing laws. In all the towns and villages around the coasts the trade in fishing and the love of the amateur for fishing excursions made it perfectly

natural that half the male population should, at certain periods of the tides, be seen in larger or smaller sailing boats, pursuing their business or their sport on the sea. The amateur crew of a good-sized fisher boat, a mile or so out at sea, could discuss their measures and arrange their plans without the slightest fear of interruption from the local police, in whose eyes the rebel-laden bark appeared but as a speck on the horizon. Then, again, the temperance processions arranged under the inspiration of the good Father Mathew himself, a sincere opponent of all secret societies and of all insurrectionary plans, were constantly used as a convenient means for the transmission of secret orders and the exchange of secret confidences.

The organisation spread with astonishing rapidity through the south and west of Ireland, and had an especial fascination for the young men who were profoundly disappointed by the anti-climax of the summer. To Philip Colston everything seemed going on with the best assurance of success. We know already that his ideas of immediate success were not merely visionary, and were not even far-reaching. Philip would have held that he and his friends had fully won their part of the game if they could only induce a certain number of brave and devoted young Irishmen to risk their lives for their country in an actual and desperate fight, and thus to proclaim their conviction that they had a national cause worth dying for. The rest, Philip thought, might be left to the country herself, to the love of the people for the land of their birth, to the chances of European politics, and to the spirit of liberty. So far as he could see, the organisation which he had helped to create was working successfully towards the opening action; and Philip's heart grew more and more full of hope. Maurice Desmond was of a less sanguine nature; and, while giving himself up absolutely to the work of or-

ganisation he did not feel by any means quite as well assured as to its immediate success as did his friend and comrade. It was ever present to Maurice's mind that the most careful plans the wit of man could arrange in such a way and for such a purpose were left at the mercy of that curse of all secret political organisations, the paid police spy. Everybody knows what a part that functionary played, even in English political associations down to the days of the great Reform Bill, and still later in political associations concerning whose plans and whose movements there would not be, in times like ours, the slightest occasion for mystery or secrecy of any kind. Of course, it was not likely that so obvious a danger would have escaped the notice of Philip Colston; but it seemed to him that the risk was hardly to be taken into consideration when compared with the urgent necessity for making a beginning and arousing the heart of the country. Maurice, in fact, had only followed his friend into the organisation; and while he was determined to take all the risks and make all the sacrifices it might demand, and while his steady heart never for one moment lost its courage, his head remained all the time cool enough for a calm study of the chances, and the one doubt present to his mind was the doubt whether the plans of the association could be carried on to the dramatic point of action without some premature disclosure or discovery which might make all the preparation abortive.

Mononia had the worst of it, as a woman might be expected to have who was placed in a position like hers at such a time. Maurice and Philip were always going about and doing something, or planning and contriving, or consulting about the best means of getting something done; while Mononia had to remain at home and look after her household duties in the regular way, and try to seem as if nothing out of the common was occupy-

ing her mind. Maurice was sometimes out for a whole night; and then, indeed, her hours were gloomy and lonely. For the most part, however, she saw Maurice much as usual; and Phil Colston came often to the cottage, and the young men did their best to keep her in good spirits. It was distinctly understood among the three that there must be no talk in the cottage about the enterprise in hand, and that there must be no appearance of secret consultation. Any news of what was going on had to be made known to Mononia during short out-of-door rambles.

Maurice and Mononia were particularly anxious that poor Murtagh Ryan and his wife should know nothing of what was going on, for they did not want the faithful old serving-man to become entangled in the perils of an enterprise to which he could give no efficient help; and it was quite certain that, if he came to know of any danger involving his young master, he would contrive somehow or other to have a share in it. Mononia meanwhile had new troubles of a peculiar kind pressing more and more upon her, which she endeavoured as long as possible to keep from the knowledge of her brother, believing that he had already quite enough to try his patience and his courage. This new trouble came from the altered ways and demeanour of Mr. Desmond. The head of the family had undoubtedly been in possession of money lately for which Mononia could not account. He had on several occasions left shillings and half-crowns and once or twice even a half sovereign lying about in the careless fashion of a man who has plenty of coin to spend. Then, again, he had taken to absenting himself for long hours in the evening and returning at night from a direction opposite to that which must have been his way if he were returning coming from the city. Mononia knew this by her own observation; for in her anxiety about him she got into the way of sitting up in

her own room until his return, and always in the dark, when the ordinary hour for going to bed in the cottage had come and passed. On several occasions lately she had heard the sound of his footstep coming along the road in the direction which led from the outer country. Her bedroom looked onto the road, and on two separate nights of moonlight she had distinctly seen her father coming home that way.

The faithful Murtagh or his wife always kept watch until the latest of the family had returned home; for Mr. Desmond had not taken to the modern practice of carrying a latch-key, and would have considered it unsuited to his dignity as head of the house if he had come home and found nobody waiting to receive him. Mononia had noticed a certain look of anxiety on the face of honest Murtagh more than once when he had happened to speak of his master; but she forbore to ask him any question, unwilling that even so devoted a servant should suspect that her father's habits gave her any uneasiness. Mononia knew herself that Mr. Desmond had not many friends now left in the city who would be likely to keep him in constant entertainment, and to retain him as a guest to a very advanced hour of the night or morning. Mr. Woodward had always kept up his friendship and his kindness for her father, and she knew that Mr. Woodward's house was always open to him; but it happened two or three times that Mr. Woodward himself actually came to the cottage during an evening of Desmond's prolonged absence, and had mentioned that he had not seen his old friend that day. Since the political troubles had become serious, and especially since the imprisonment of Maurice, there had been a falling off in the number of those to whom the elder Desmond was welcome in the city; and he had never said anything to Mononia which might lead her to the belief that he had made new friends who were anx-

ious to entertain him. At one time the alarming suspicion came into her mind that her father might have taken to gambling, and that some sudden run of luck in that way might account for the scattered coins. But her watchfulness of late had satisfied her that her father usually returned home from the direction of the outlying country, and not from that of the city; and she could hardly suppose that there were any mysterious gambling houses among the meadow-lands or the hills of the lonely river. There were hours when Mononia almost forgot the troubles that were threatening her and hers from the outer world, when some new anxiety beset her about the ways of her father whom, with all his faults, she so dearly loved, and over whom it seemed her melancholy duty was to watch with futile care. As yet there was hardly anything which seemed to justify an anxious daughter in remonstrating with her father. All that could be said was that the elder Desmond sometimes came home very late, and that he returned usually from the direction of the country; and that he had left pieces of money lying now and then on his table at a time when he was supposed to have no money of his own.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### MONONIA'S ANTIPATHY

MONONIA was beginning to think that she had better speak to her father frankly on the subject, when the head of the house of Desmond suddenly anticipated her filial resolve by opening up the subject himself, or at least giving her the most obvious opportunity of opening it up. One dismal winter evening, before night had yet set in, she was sitting alone in her room, and trying to beguile the time by scraps of reading and scraps of songs, while listening anxiously for any sound which might admonish her of a coming visitor. The only coming visitor, it should be said, who was in the least likely to invite her attention at such a time, was either Maurice or Philip. Maurice and Philip had both got into the way of announcing their approach at certain times by a peculiar whistle, which reproduced the closing bars of an old Irish song. Each young man used the same signal for the same purpose; and the purpose was to warn Mononia, and to give her an opportunity of getting rid of any other visitor, if she had any such, or of opening the door herself and exchanging a word or two with the brother or the friend before he entered the cottage. The principal motive of this little mystery was that something might be hurriedly told to her which it was not well that the head of the house of Desmond should hear just then. Now, as Mononia sat and listened, she heard the music of the familiar air distinctly whistled from the road outside the cottage. The notes were exactly those of the musical signal agreed upon, but the whistle was certainly not like that to which she had lately been so well accustomed. The sound thrilled her with surprise and anxiety. It was the signal, and yet not quite the signal. It was like an imitation of

the whistle, but not the whistle itself. Could it possibly be a mere chance imitation? Could it be an imitation with a purpose? Could some one else, not Maurice or Philip, have been initiated into the mystery? Mononia did not give herself much time to think over this mystery question. The best course for her to take in any case was, she felt sure, to go and open the door at once, and look out. If the whistle had no meaning, then no harm would be done; and, if it were a signal from any one, it had better meet with her attention. Even at that moment the whistle came again; and then Mononia passed noiselessly through the house to the door opening on the road, turned its lock, and, to her utter surprise, admitted her father and a stranger. Mr. Desmond broke into a smile on seeing his daughter, and on observing the surprise which she could not keep from manifesting in her expression.

"You see I have got the musical signal all right," he said. "You did not know that I was one of the initiated, eh, Mononia?"

"It is like Maurice's whistle," Mononia answered quietly. She was not inclined to go into explanations in the presence of a stranger.

"I never learned it from Maurice," Mr. Desmond said, still with the manner of one who flatters himself that he is developing some play of embarrassing humour. "Well, never mind that just now, Mononia. I can explain at some other time how I became possessed of the mystic signal. Just now I have brought a friend whom I wish to present to you. Mononia, this is my friend, Mr. O'Rourke. O'Rourke, this is my daughter, Mononia Desmond."

The stranger took off his hat, flourished it, and made an elaborate bow. Mononia made a less ceremonious acknowledgment of his courtesy.

"Come into the cottage," she said with as much ap-

pearance of hospitality as she could get up under the circumstances; for she thought the conditions of the meeting rather embarrassing, and for some undefined reason did not quite take to the unexpected visitor. Then she led the way into the sitting-room, which looked bright and cheery enough, with its fire, its lamp, its books, and its music; and she invited Mr. O'Rourke to take a chair, which he did after another elaborate bow.

"You did not expect me quite so early, Mononia," Mr. Desmond observed.

"No, father, I did not expect you so early; and I am very glad you have come, for the night seems raw and bitter, and is not likely to improve your cold. My father has had a bad cold lately, Mr. O'Rourke; and I am afraid I am one of the anxious daughters, and sometimes weary him with my alarm."

"Mononia is indeed a devoted daughter, O'Rourke," Mr. Desmond said with condescending grace. "The daughters of our house have always been like that."

While her father was uttering these words, Mononia was quietly studying the appearance of the stranger. Mr. O'Rourke was a man apparently of about thirty-five, with thick, curling yellow hair, light grey eyes, thin lips, and a strongly set jaw. There was something, to her, curiously unprepossessing about the lips and the jaw; and she noticed that the light grey eyes kept glancing up under their heavy eyelashes around the room, as if their owner were making a mental note of every object which it contained. A whimsical idea came into Mononia's mind that, if she were writing a story about a sheriff's officer in disguise making a mental inventory of some debtor's household possessions, she should describe him with just such lips and such a jaw as those which belonged to Mr. O'Rourke. The stranger was fashionably dressed,— dressed, indeed, with an over-elaboration

of fashion. Mononia formed an impression with feminine quickness in this instance, and she said to herself that she did not like Mr. O'Rourke.

"Mr. O'Rourke," said Mr. Desmond, "is one of my most recent friends, Mononia; but he is not the less to be trusted because he has not been long tried. He and I are engaged together in a cause and in work which naturally concerns the head of the house of Desmond. Mr. O'Rourke desired to make your acquaintance; and I have brought him at this hour because I knew we should find you still awake, and we were engaged earlier and shall be engaged much later. We have not very long to remain, Mononia; and I think Mr. O'Rourke would be all the better for a glass of hot whiskey and water. Will you kindly tell Murtagh Ryan to bring us the materials?"

"But, pray, do not ask Miss Desmond to give herself any trouble on my account," Mr. O'Rourke said with another bend of his head to Mononia. "I have been out of Ireland so much lately that I am afraid I have lost my appreciation of our national beverage."

"It is not the least trouble," Mononia said, rising from her chair; "and I am sure the night is cold enough to warrant you in renewing your acquaintance with our national beverage, Mr. O'Rourke." She could not refrain from imparting a slight tone of satire to her repetition of Mr. O'Rourke's pompous phrase. There was an air of elaborate gentility about Mr. O'Rourke's manner which jarred upon her. The stranger was so evidently trying to be a gentleman that Mononia could not understand how her father had failed to see that he certainly was not by any means one. The aid of Murtagh Ryan was soon called in, and Mr. Desmond and his guest were seated comfortably beside what Mononia felt sure Mr. O'Rourke would have liked to call the flowing bowl.

Mr. O'Rourke touched his glass with his lips, and then raised it a little in the air, bending his head to Mononia at the same time as if he were pledging her in the flowing bowl.

"I have for a long time been anxious to have the honour of being presented to Miss Desmond," he said; "and now Miss Desmond's father has consented to give my wish the sanction of his approval."

"You are very kind," Mononia replied with somewhat cold acknowledgment of his politeness; "and any friend of my father's is, of course, welcome to me. My father had not mentioned your name to me before."

"New friends are sometimes better than older acquaintances," Mr. Desmond graciously observed. "When a man is down in the world, it may happen that he has this truth brought home to his mind. Many of my old friends have lately been less anxious to see me than they used to be when I could offer them a more liberal hospitality, and I have no claims on Mr. O'Rourke" —

"Pardon me, Mr. Desmond. The head of the house of Desmond has a claim on the homage and the reverence of every true Irishman, especially when the head of that house is a patriot devoted to the cause of his country. Where you lead, Mr. Desmond, it is my duty, my privilege, and my delight to follow."

Mr. O'Rourke's voice seemed to Mononia peculiarly harsh and wiry in its tone. His mode of delivering his little speeches might have suited a burlesque actor if it were not for the look of devotedness in his light grey eyes. Mononia could not help noticing, too, that his teeth were very large and prominent.

"My daughter is not yet aware," Mr. Desmond observed, "of the object in which you and I are engaged."

Mr. O'Rourke interrupted his host, although with apologetic gesture and an air of great deference.

"Pray do not let Miss Desmond suppose," he said, "that my object in desiring to make her acquaintance has anything to do with any political organization in which you are a leader and I am but the most humble follower. I have heard so much of Miss Desmond, of her gifts and her charms, that I could not but be anxious to have the honour of being presented to her. I have heard of Miss Desmond in the metropolis of the Saxon and in the great republic on the other side of the Atlantic. Wherever true Irishmen assemble, the name of Miss Desmond is known and honoured."

"I did not know that my name had travelled so far," Mononia said with a contempt which she hardly thought it necessary to conceal. "I have certainly done nothing to entitle me to any notice outside the very small circle of my immediate friends."

"Our good deeds sometimes travel further than we know of," O'Rourke replied with another bend of the head; "and the Irishman abroad cannot fail to be interested in every member of the house of Desmond."

Mr. Desmond understood the look of impatience on his daughter's face, and he apparently began to think that the new-comer's chivalrous admiration was carrying him rather far.

"Mr. O'Rourke tells me," he said, "that he has heard of your love for our Irish music and for some of our newer national poets. Perhaps you would sing him a song, Mononia; for we must soon be going."

Mononia was glad to have an opportunity of singing, if only because it must necessarily cause some interruption to Mr. O'Rourke's elaborate compliments. She did not, however, sing one of the songs which really ranked among her especial favourites; and she did not call in the aid of her harp. She sang a rather commonplace ballad of the ordinary drawing-room style, a long way after Thomas Moore. It was very long, and she did

not spare her hearers any of it. She dreaded the resumption of Mr. O'Rourke's compliments.

"You have, indeed, done me an honour," Mr. O'Rourke exclaimed fervently, but with his usual deliberateness of utterance,—drawl, Mononia would have called it. "We can have no difficulty in choosing the songstress of our new movement."

Mr. Desmond looked at his watch.

"We must go, O'Rourke," he said. "Our time is nearly up."

"Must you go out to-night, father?" Mononia asked anxiously.

"Why not to-night, Mononia?"

"Because it is so cold and raw and windy, and you are not well; and you ought not to be exposed to the wintry air so late. Must he go, Mr. O'Rourke?" She turned almost pleadingly to the stranger, forgetting for the moment her dislike for him in the hope that he might help her in her effort to keep Mr. Desmond at home.

"It is not for me to give orders, but to obey them," O'Rourke said. "No one could be less willing than I to leave Miss Desmond's company." Mononia felt that she disliked him rather more than before.

"May I have the honour of calling again at some hour better suited for a visit?" O'Rourke asked.

"I am always happy to receive any friend of my father's," was Mononia's ceremonious reply. The formal parting took place; but, as Mr. Desmond was leaving the room, Mononia caught him by the arm.

"Father, I want to speak to you for a moment," she said; and she drew him back into the room. She closed the door behind him, leaving O'Rourke in the hall, in the excitement of the moment somewhat forgetful, perhaps, of the courtesy due to her guest.

"Dear father," she said, still with her hand upon Mr.

Desmond's arm, "who is this man, and why must you go out with him to-night?"

"My dear Mononia, what have you to say against my friend O'Rourke?"

"I know nothing of him, and you never before mentioned his name to me. I don't like his looks, and I don't like his voice or his manner; and I don't understand why you should give up your nights to him or where you and he can be going together. Have you been with him all these nights lately?"

"Yes, Mononia, we are companions together in a common cause. The work to be done for Ireland is not wholly to be left in the hands of the younger generation. Your brother Maurice is not yet the representative of the house of Desmond. Perhaps, dear girl, we, the elders, may sometimes have to take a lesson from the young; but we must not abdicate our places for all that. You will hear of my friend O'Rourke yet. The world will hear of him. I will tell you more to-morrow. Now I must say good-night." Then he kissed his daughter, and left the room, closing the door behind him. Mononia heard the voices of the men as they passed through the little hall and went out into the night. Then she sank into a chair, and gave herself up to bewildered thought. It was clear to her that her father was mixed up in some sort of political organisation, and it was clear also that he misunderstood and resented his exclusion from the projects of Maurice and Philip. The very fact that he had learned for some reason to imitate the whistle adopted by the two young men as a signal showed that some new, strange, and ill-omened influence must be working upon him. Then who was Mr. O'Rourke, and what was the meaning of the ostentatious deference which he put on for the head of the house of Desmond? How did he come to understand the effect that such deference would be likely to

produce on the mind of her father, and what was his motive in exerting it? The night air seemed filled for her with omens of some impending and bewildering danger.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### "OH FOR A TONGUE TO CURSE THE SLAVE"

THE day that followed was one of heavy trial to Mononia. It was a day of solitude, broken only by one short conversation with her father and an evening visit from her father and Mr. O'Rourke in company. Except for these two interruptions, she was left utterly a prey to her own gloomy thoughts and vague, dismal forebodings. She did not see Maurice, nor expect to see him all that day. On the evening of the day when Mr. O'Rourke paid his first visit,— the visit late at night,— her brother had taken leave of her, as he was about to make a short excursion into the country. And Mononia knew quite well, without the need of putting any question to him on the subject, that he was off on some mission connected with the political organisation to which he and Philip had devoted themselves. In the year 1848 there were no provincial daily newspapers. The journal to which Maurice Desmond contributed made its appearance three times a week, and was published in the evening. There were, therefore, some days in every week which Maurice could easily make use of for his own purposes, and when his absence from the city would not be likely to create either surprise or suspicion. Mononia knew that she was not to expect him that day, and the knowledge seemed to make the day all the longer. She had failed to extract from her father any satisfying or encouraging admission or explanation, when she pressed him in the morning to tell her something about his companionship with the newly discovered O'Rourke. Mr. Desmond was in one of his grand and mysterious moods. He smiled benignly on his daughter, but seemed to be in that elevated mood which prompts the elders to lay down the law about the

undesirability of young persons asking questions. For all his mystery, however, it appeared to be his will to convey clearly to his daughter's mind the idea that he was engaged in a political work of momentous import from which his unappreciative children had been vainly trying to shut him out. Nor could she get from him any explanation as to the manner in which he had become acquainted with Mr. O'Rourke. He only shook his head, smiled with superior wisdom, and repeated his assurance that the world would hear something yet of Mr. O'Rourke.

Mononia could have waited quite patiently for Mr. O'Rourke's fame to burst upon an astonished world if she had not been compelled in the mean time to hear something more of Mr. O'Rourke herself. Mr. O'Rourke's second visit took place, as has been said, the evening after his first presentation at the cottage of the Desmonds. The visit, however, was earlier than that of the preceding evening; and this time there was no imitation of the signal whistle. O'Rourke put on, at the very opening of the second visit, a half-confidential manner towards Mononia. There was something about him which always excited Mononia's naturally keen sense of the ridiculous. Despite all the vague alarms which were excited in her by his association with her father, she found herself strangely tempted every now and then to regard the new-comer purely from a comic point of view. It came into her mind more than once that a melodramatic actor, who was engaged in playing the part of a heavy villain burdened with a secret which he was bursting to disclose, might well have made a study of Mr. O'Rourke. Mononia, however, felt bound to act becomingly in her character of hostess; and she did her best not to express in her manner too much of the estimate which she was disposed to form of her guest. She played her part of hostess very gracefully — a feat which came naturally to

her — and as graciously as she could. Mr. Desmond, O'Rourke, and Mononia had tea together, according to the fashion which then prevailed in Ireland, when tea was a regular set-down meal some two hours after the early dinner of those days. Mononia presided, and poured the tea, of course, and was amused and annoyed by Mr. O'Rourke's frequent glances of not merely undisguised, but ostentatious admiration.

"You have been a great traveller, I suppose, Mr. O'Rourke?" she asked, referring to some allusion he had made to travels in far distant lands, and glad of any opportunity to start a general conversation. Up to this time Mr. O'Rourke's discourse had, for the most part, taken the form of personal compliment.

"I have seen many countries, indeed," O'Rourke replied with the manner of one who means to convey that he has done wonderful things, but does not want to make a boast of it.

"Mr. O'Rourke has been in the East," Mr. Desmond observed. "My daughter loves to read all about the East, O'Rourke. She used to say that she would give her eyes to travel in the East."

"The East might well give much to see those eyes," O'Rourke replied.

Mononia did not seem as if she particularly cared just then to hear any more about the East. She turned to the West.

"You have lived in America, have you not?" she asked.

"Yes, Miss Desmond, I have lived much in America. I feel well assured that America is destined to be the chosen home of our race. The true strength of Ireland is in America, and the world will know it yet."

"Mr. O'Rourke has known all the great Americans of his time," Mr. Desmond announced.

Hereupon Mononia began to grow really interested.

There was already a strong and deep sympathy between the youth of Ireland and the American republic. Mononia asked her guest a number of eager questions about the rising poets and thinkers of America, but she found that he could tell her little or nothing about them. He had met them all, and, in fact, knew them all,—so he gave her to understand,—but he had nothing whatever to tell her about them which spoke of any personal knowledge; and, indeed, when he ceased to be quite vague, he seemed to her to become decidedly inaccurate. She did not therefore feel inclined or encouraged to follow out that path of inquiry.

Mr. Desmond evidently thought that that branch of the conversation had withered into failure.

"Our friend has been more of a politician than a student of literature in the United States," he observed; "and, if he could tell you all he knows about politics in America, I dare say he would somewhat astonish you, Mononia."

"I am afraid I don't know enough to be astonished," Mononia composedly replied.

"I could have little to tell that would astonish one who, like Miss Desmond, has kept her finger on the pulse of every political movement which throbbed to the cause of her country," Mr. O'Rourke eloquently declared. "It is for her to inspire and for us to execute."

"You may speak as freely as you like before my daughter," Mr. Desmond said condescendingly. "She was fully in her brother's secrets, and in the secrets of others when I was not permitted to share them. Pray, Mononia, do not interrupt me just yet"—

"Dear father, I was not going to interrupt you."

"Well, I know what you were thinking of. You were thinking that, if I was kept out of the secrets, it was only out of love and consideration for me, because you and Maurice thought I was rather too old a person to be

brought into such dangers. Was not that what I always told you, O'Rourke?"

"I have always understood from Mr. Desmond that his son and daughter wished to save and shelter him from the dangers which they felt bound to brave on their own account."

"Please don't make a heroine of me," Mononia said; "for I have no claim to any such title. I have never put myself into the slightest danger."

"There is the heroine of the secluded chamber as well as the heroine of the battlefield," Mr. O'Rourke grandly observed.

"Just now I think I should prefer to be the heroine of the secluded chamber," Mononia said with a glance of undisguised contempt.

"I was about to say when I was interrupted," Mr, Desmond interposed, "that my daughter and my son did all they could, from the best of motives, to keep from me any knowledge of this new movement, because they believed I had grown too old to share its dangers with them. But you see, Mononia, that there are duties devolving on the representatives of ancient families of which they cannot divest themselves, and of which no protecting arm, filial or other, can divest them. I am now once again, thanks to my own resolve and to my friend O'Rourke, in my rightful place; and there need be no further secrets from me. You have heard, Mononia," and here Mr. Desmond lapsed from dignity to pleasantry, —"you have heard with your own ears that we have got the secret of the mystic signal." Mr. Desmond chuckled audibly over this stroke of humour.

"There was not much of a deep political mystery in that," Mononia said in a studiously placid tone. "It was a personal mystery altogether: even the conspirator of melodrama could have made nothing of it. It was only Maurice's way of letting me know of his coming,

and we let Philip Colston into the secret; and that was the whole extent of the conspiracy."

"Mr. Desmond will soon be in his rightful place," O'Rourke said, "at the head of the national movement. He has made his influence felt already in the wise guidance of its counsels, and men are following him who might not have seen their way to follow another leader. No one can know all that better than I."

"Then you are in the counsels of its leading men?" Mononia asked in a tone which she tried to make not too sceptical or, at all events, not too scornful.

"I have always striven, in my humble way, for the cause of Ireland, wherever I have been,—in America, in England, and now in Ireland herself."

"Mr. O'Rourke has worked among the English Chartists," Desmond said; "and he has found a good many friends to the Irish cause among them. Is it not so, O'Rourke? Tell Miss Desmond about it."

Mr. Desmond then rose from the table, and left the room, telling his daughter that he had some directions to give to Murtagh Ryan. Mononia was glad of his temporary absence, because she thought it gave her a better chance of extracting from Mr. O'Rourke some ideas as to his share in the movement and as to the share her father was taking in it.

"You have been much among the English Chartists?" she asked.

"I have been admitted into the counsels of their best men," O'Rourke declared emphatically.

"Then of course you know Mr. Woodward?"

"I have not yet the honour of knowing Mr. Woodward,—not personally, that is to say. I have heard much about him, of course; but we have not yet had an opportunity of meeting."

"Yet you have been some time in these regions, have you not?"

"Yes, a short time, Miss Desmond; but I have been much engaged in other ways, as Mr. Desmond knows, and our time has been greatly taken up."

"Still, I should have thought you would be anxious to meet one who stands so high among the English Chartists as I am told Mr. Woodward does."

"Your father has been gracious enough to say that he would bring us together."

"But you have not been brought together yet, Mr. Woodward and you?"

"Not yet: there have been so many other things to do; and Mr. Woodward, of course, is not engaged in this Irish movement. I do not know that even the very worthiest of Englishmen can be intrusted so far as that with the secret movements of the Irish national cause." Mr. O'Rourke seemed to Mononia to be a little impatient of this irrelevant discussion about Mr. Woodward, and to be anxious to get away from it. Mononia, for reasons of her own, felt all the more inclined to hold him to it.

"Mr. Woodward, I suppose, would have heard of you?" she insinuated gently. "His word of commendation would go a long way, I am sure, with my father and brother."

"Mr. Woodward has lived so long out of London," O'Rourke said with some hesitation.

"But he makes visits to London very often, and I think he knows all that the leading Chartists are doing."

"Mr. Desmond is gracious enough to repose full confidence in me; and his confidence, I venture to think, will not be misplaced. Your father is my leader, Miss Desmond. I follow his directions. He is, indeed, a wise and noble leader, ready to place his influence, his experience, and his intellect at the service of the cause to which he has come to devote himself absolutely. He does not spare himself in the cause. He is princely in

his generosity, as becomes the prince of an ancient house."

The words sent a cold shudder through Mononia. "I must get to the meaning of this," she thought to herself.

"My father is a very poor man, Mr. O'Rourke," she said. "His heart is generous, indeed; but he has not the means of being princely or even liberal in his gifts."

"I know that Mr. Desmond has suffered great losses, and that he is no longer in the position which the head of such a family ought to occupy. But he has shown himself liberal for a man whose means, as we all know, are narrow." Mr. O'Rourke once again seemed embarrassed by the turn which he himself had given to the conversation and his eyes looked uneasily away from Mononia's. Just at that moment Mr. Desmond returned to the room, and the question of his princely givings had to be dropped. Mononia, meanwhile, was forming strange and wild conjectures about the character of her guest. Mr. O'Rourke, no doubt, might have been under the impression that he could find no better way of gaining the daughter's confidence than by praising the father's generosity. Still, it was hardly probable that, if he knew as much as she did about Mr. Desmond's poverty, he would have made any allusion to the liberality of his gifts. To be sure, her father never was a man who could keep money; and, if he had any to give away, he naturally would have given it for the help of any cause in which he had thought fit to engage himself. But from what source could he have obtained any money to give away? This brought back to her mind recent and troublous ideas. Was it possible that her father could have accepted from Mr. Woodward sums of money to give to the associates of Mr. O'Rourke? And, then, how was it that Mr. O'Rourke, if freely admitted to the counsels of the leading English Chartists had never made himself known to Mr. Woodward, and obtained Mr.

Woodward's testimony to his good faith? A terrible suspicion was growing up in Mononia's mind. She knew her father's weaknesses too well not to feel quite sure that any clever adventurer, with a plausible tongue and a skilful employment of flattery, could easily insinuate himself into his good graces and confidence. But what could the clever adventurer have to gain by securing Mr. Desmond's good graces? What profit would it be to him if he were to work his way into Mr. Desmond's fullest confidence? This thought kept working in her mind, even while she was joining in the general conversation which set in when her father returned; and a strange, wild suspicion was born of it. Mononia was romantic and imaginative by nature; and she resolved to test her suspicion after a fashion which might have seemed more suited for the heroine of some bygone romance than for the drawing-room of a young woman belonging to our commonplace days.

The time came in due course for Murtagh Ryan to bring in the decanter of whiskey, the hot water, the lemons, and the glasses. Mr. Desmond and his guest began to apply themselves to the flowing bowl. Mononia talked very graciously to her guest, and Mr. Desmond began to be in hopes that she was allowing herself to form a better opinion of the stranger. Up to this time he could not help thinking that his daughter's manner had not seemed to convey quite that sort of welcome which a hostess of the house of Desmond might be expected to offer to any guest, however strange or humble. Mononia's idea, meanwhile, was beginning to take shape in her mind. Something or other was said about Irish national characteristics, and Mononia seized the opportunity.

"We are far too trustful, we Irish," she said. "That is one of our great national weaknesses."

"Can there be any," O'Rourke exclaimed, "to whom

a nature like Miss Desmond's could fearlessly intrust itself?"

"I suppose that is a compliment," Mononia replied; "but I am not good at paying or appreciating compliments. I was thinking of our Irish national movements. Every one of them so far has failed because we could not keep our counsels to ourselves or to those who had a right to be intrusted with them."

"The leaders of a great national movement," Mr. Desmond declared, "ought to know by inspiration the men whom they can trust and the men whom they cannot trust. They ought to be like the Ancient Mariner who says, 'I know the man who must hear me,—to him my tale I tell.'"

"As we have got into the realms of poetry," Mr. O'Rourke gracefully suggested, "why should we not get into the realms of song, if Miss Desmond will favour us once again?" He turned to Mononia with a beseeching glance.

"Yes, I am in a mood to sing," Mononia answered, "if you are both in a mood to listen. What I shall sing is not actually a song, but only some lines from one of Moore's longer poems, which I have set to music of my own invention. It will be as new to you, dear father, as to Mr. O'Rourke; for I have never sung it before except to myself, and I only composed my poor attempt at music quite lately, because of something which was told me about the trials for high treason the other day. It has been haunting me ever since, but I never ventured to sing it for any one until now. I think my music will be all the better for the harp's accompaniment."

Mr. Desmond was much pleased to find his daughter so gracious to her guest. It was not Mononia's way to volunteer any of her skill as a composer of music; and he therefore regarded this offer on her part as an act of special favour, well becoming the daughter of so distinguished a house.

Meanwhile Mononia's mind was possessed with her one idea; and perhaps she may have been, in her humble way, an unconscious imitator of Hamlet in a certain highly wrought passage of his career. She brought forth her harp from its place, and drew from its chords some notes of impassioned melody, inspired by that wild old Gaelic music which she loved. Then came the opening words of the lines which she had set to music. She sang them, not in a strain of fierce denunciation, but in a low and thrilling tone, as if the singer found it impossible to convey in words or notes the full meaning of the doom which she was striving to pronounce. The verse she sang proclaimed the guilt and prayed for the punishment of a traitor who had wormed himself into the secrets of a great patriotic organisation, in order that he might do his hireling office, and betray them to the enemies of the cause. The lines began,—

> "Oh for a tongue to curse the slave
> Whose treason like a withering blight
> Comes o'er the counsels of the brave,
> And blasts them in their hour of might."

Mononia, as she gave forth these lines, kept her eyes fixed on the uncomfortable O'Rourke. He had been listening with deferential politeness to the opening notes of the harp, and was suddenly startled into a deeper interest by the first words which the singer pronounced. Then he began to feel disturbed and uneasy; but he pulled himself together, and tried to put away a gathering scowl and substitute a bland smile for it. As Mononia went on, she still kept her eyes riveted to his face; and he looked up once or twice, just for a brief glance, and then turned his eyes away, and did not look towards her again. The girl went on with her song, which predicted all sorts of privations, pains, disappointments, and pains of mind and body, for the wretched traitor, and

closed with the outpouring of a terrible hope that, "When from his body his spirit flies," he might ever after be doomed to dwell "full in the sight of Paradise beholding heaven." And here Mononia almost broke down, and well-nigh abandoned her purpose in mere hysterical confusion. For, when she had first set to music the words taken from Moore's "Fire-worshippers," she had not thought of herself as in any way identified with the prayer for such a doom to any creature, however despicable and guilty. The poem had always been familiar to Mononia; but, then, its scenes were laid in Eastern lands, and the fierce appeal for the punishment of the traitor was addressed to the Prophet to whom men and women offered their prayers there, and, even when more lately her attention had been drawn to the lines by some of the State trials at Clonmel, she had no personal feelings associated with the imprecation. The incident during the State trials had been made known to her by Maurice. A friend of Maurice's who was present at the trial, and who happened to be seated near the dock in which the prisoners were standing, had taken advantage of a short interval in the sitting of the court, and handed a small volume to Thomas Francis Meagher, the brilliant orator of Young Ireland, then upon his trial for high treason, whom he knew personally, and asked him to write an autograph in the book. Meagher good-naturedly complied, after his kindly fashion; and as an autograph he wrote the four lines from Moore's poem which have just been quoted, adding the words that they had been written by him after having heard the evidence of the informer who had been employed by the government to get at the secrets of the confederates and betray them. Meagher signed these words with his own name, and gave back the book. When Mononia heard the story, she was taken with a desire to put Moore's lines to music; but even then she had no thought of any

personal association with the betrayer, or of the passionate prayer for his punishment, as something coming directly from her. Now that she had come nearly to the climax of the denunciation and the curse, and saw the man before her whom, for some hardly explained reasons, she suspected of being a traitor and a spy, and felt that the final words of the curse had yet to ring from her voice into his ears, she found that she could not utter a word without the certainty of finding her voice a mere failure. She finished with some wild clangour of sounds stricken from the chords of the harp, and then rose from her seat by the instrument and, without a spoken word, resumed her place at the table. She still, however, kept her eyes fixed on O'Rourke. As yet O'Rourke did not look up. Mr. Desmond glanced in somewhat puzzled, not to say bewildered, fashion first at his guest and then at his daughter, and then again at his guest.

"My dear Mononia," he said, "you will quite startle Mr. O'Rourke by the vehemence of your musical imprecation."

Mononia was now recovering herself.

"Why should Mr. O'Rourke be startled?" she asked composedly. "Moore's lines are only intended to speak the doom of a traitor and a spy."

"It is a very fine song," Mr. O'Rourke said, somewhat constrained, with the manner of one who feels it incumbent on him to join in the conversation, but has not any particular opinion to express. "I — liked it very much; and Miss Desmond sang it with such force — and such musical power — that it quite carried me away — and made a very great impression."

"The words are very fine," Mr. Desmond responded, "and I think, Mononia, you have caught the spirit of them very well in your music; but I don't suppose Mr. O'Rourke is quite accustomed to hear such fierce denunciation poured forth, even in music, by young ladies in London drawing-rooms."

"The words might not have been appropriate in London drawing-rooms, dear father."

"How do you mean, Mononia?"

"Well, the ordinary London drawing-room would hardly enter very much into our Irish feelings about spies and informers and traitors."

"Perhaps Miss Desmond will favour us with another of our — her songs?" Mr. O'Rourke suggested with a sickly smile.

"Do, please, Mononia," Mr. Desmond urged. "Give us something different, something of a brighter order; and don't send our guest away with such dismal notes of doom ringing in his ears."

"Why should the dismal notes of doom ring in Mr. O'Rourke's ears?" Mononia asked.

"Oh, I don't take it so seriously as all that," O'Rourke said hastily. "I don't take it to heart. But still, if Miss Desmond would favour us with something brighter before we go away"—

"Must you go out to-night, father?" Mononia asked, turning from her guest and looking earnestly at Mr. Desmond.

"Why should I not go out to-night, Mononia,— why not this night in particular?"

"Because you have a cold, dear, and you don't look well; and I wish you would not go out this wild, wet night. I am sure Mr. O'Rourke could spare you this night?" And she turned her eyes fixedly on the uneasy O'Rourke.

Mr. Desmond did not allow the uneasy O'Rourke to make any reply.

"It is of particular importance," he said, "that I should go out to-night. Come, O'Rourke, we had better go."

Mononia could always read her father's face easily enough; and she thought she could see in its expression

now, for all its appearance of supreme authority, a look of doubt and suspicion. The belief gave her some comfort. Perhaps her song had not wholly failed in its purpose. Perhaps it had aroused in Mr. Desmond's mind some question as to the wisdom of trusting himself to Mr. O'Rourke's companionship, and might set him on to make inquiries as to this cosmopolitan revolutionist's character and credentials. Mononia began to be of good hope that she had gained some advantage thus far, although she knew Mr. Desmond too well to believe there was much chance of his being talked at once out of any resolve which he had announced in the presence of a stranger. She did not use any further pressure to induce her father to remain at home; but she made up her mind that she would wait up for him until he returned to the cottage, whatever that hour of the morning might be, and that she would try to get him to hear some explanation of her suspicions concerning Mr. O'Rourke. Truth to say, she had but the merest suspicions to set forth. She knew absolutely nothing about Mr. O'Rourke; and, so far as her acquaintance with him personally could suggest any ideas as to his character, she had nothing to go upon but her impression that his eyes looked treacherous, that his manner was one of fawning affectation, and that he paid compliments with fulsome and awkward exaggeration. Now a man might be a very sincere patriot and quite a respectable person, although he had these unpleasing peculiarities. But, then, Mononia also bore in mind that Mr. O'Rourke, although in the confidence of the leading English Chartists, had never been to see Mr. Woodward; that, although he knew all the eminent men in the United States, he had apparently never met with one of those whose names were familiar to her; that Mr. Desmond had never been concerned in the secret organisation until Mr. O'Rourke turned up; and that

Mr. O'Rourke had at once treated him as if he were an acknowledged leader of the movement.

Mononia saw quite clearly that her father's greatest weakness was his pride in what he believed to be his ancestral rank as the head of the house of Desmond, and she felt little doubt that an audacious and unscrupulous flatterer might persuade him into anything by working on that part of his nature. So far as she could form any reasonable conjecture on the subject, her idea was that Mr. O'Rourke had flattered her father into the belief that he ought to take a leading part in the movement, with the sole purpose of bringing him, O'Rourke, into an acquaintanceship with some of those engaged in it, and enabling him to get some information as to its purposes and its plans, which he could not have obtained without such an introduction.

In the mean while Mononia had nothing to do but to wish her father good-night, which she did with compassionate tenderness. Mr. Desmond's manner in returning her good-night had something in it, she told herself hopefully, which promised a new confidence between them. Her farewell to Mr. O'Rourke was a piece of mere formality, which she did not even try to set off by any counterfeit presentiment of friendly warmth. For a moment after the two men had left the cottage she felt a pang of doubt, and something like contrition because of her attitude towards Mr. O'Rourke. After all, she might have wronged him utterly; and was it right to have hurt his feelings and shown herself so hard and cruel on mere suspicion? Again she told herself that it was not a mere suspicion, that no mere suspicion could have led her so far astray as to form the estimate she had formed of the character of a man whom she had seen yesterday for the first time. How absolutely lonely she felt, with no one to counsel her on such a subject, no one to tell of the distrust she felt, no one to help her

in trying to avert the danger which she feared must come from the ill-omened companionship between her father and Mr. O'Rourke! Maurice was away, Philip was away. She did not even know where a letter or a message of any kind could be sent to either of them. The only course she could think of was to go and see Mr. Conrad in the morning, if she could not in the mean time prevail upon her father to make himself certain as to the character of Mr. O'Rourke. The wind came down the river in stormy gusts,—it was already close to midnight,—and there was nothing for Mononia to do but to sit up in the company of her distracting doubts and fears, and to wait for her father's return.

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### "AH! SURELY, NOTHING DIES BUT SOMETHING MOURNS"

MONONIA had not very long to wait. About an hour after midnight she heard the bell of the roadside door ring sharply, and even violently; and then she heard Murtagh making hurried movements to answer the summons. When Murtagh slept was never quite clear to Mononia; for, at whatever hour of the morning her father returned home, it would seem that the ring at the roadside door always brought the old man promptly to his post as guardian of the portal. This time, apparently, Mr. Desmond had not come home alone; for she could hear that there were two strange voices engaged in explanation of some kind with Murtagh. For aught she could tell, however, Mr. Desmond might have been in the habit of returning home thus accompanied. And her immediate sensations were of thankfulness, first because her father had returned home at a comparatively early hour, and next because Mr. O'Rourke did not seem to be one of his companions.

She remained, therefore, quietly in her room, waiting until the parting ceremonials should be over, and believing it was not impossible that, as the night was cold and stormy, her father might feel himself bound to exercise some duties of hospitality before bidding his fellow-wayfarers good-night. The strangers certainly had entered the cottage, and presently Mononia heard the voice of Mrs. Ryan mingling in low tones with the voices of the men. Then, indeed, her mind began to misgive her. Mr. Desmond, whatever his weaknesses and defects, had never given himself up to the convivial ways which were still rather common in the Ireland of his time. Her heart sank within her as she felt the chill conviction

that her father had become suddenly ill. And she was about to hasten to his side, when Murtagh opened the door of the sitting-room, and told her, with an expression of anxiety which he was evidently trying to repress, that the poor masther had been taken ill. "Not very much, we hope, Miss, with the help of God." And Mononia did not wait to hear any more. She found her father lying still dressed on his bed, with Mrs. Ryan and one stranger near him. Mr. Desmond's face was looking miserably pale and sunken and wax-like, and his eyes were closed. When he heard his daughter's voice, he opened his eyes, looked up at her, and smiled sweetly.

"It was only a faint, Mononia, dearest," he murmured. "Never fainted before in all my life. But don't be frightened: it won't come to anything. We had a long way to walk, and it rained torrents all the time." Then he closed his eyes again, and his voice sank into silence for a few moments. The stranger, who was a young workingman from the neighbourhood, explained to Mononia, in a sympathetic and almost reverential whisper, that Mr. Desmond had been seized with a faintness while talking with some friends at a farm-house, and that, when he got better, the narrator and a comrade had undertaken to accompany him home, and that just as he got to his own door he had fallen into another faint. The young man added that his companion had gone to look for a doctor, and that it would not be long before one came. Mr. Desmond opened his eyes again, and resumed his murmured explanation as if no interval had occurred.

"Only too right, I am afraid, my dear, in your suspicions about that fellow O'Rourke. We had some arrangements to make, or, rather, I had some orders to give, up at Tom Mooney's farm, near the cross-roads there. And, when we got there, the moment I turned my back he left the place without telling any man

where he was bound for or why he was going so soon." Then the old man's voice sank again into silence.

"Don't try to speak any more, dearest father," Mononia whispered, as she bent over him and kissed his cheek. "The doctor will be here very soon, and you must not tire yourself by trying to talk just now. You can tell me all about it to-morrow."

"That's right, Miss," the young man said. "It's just rest Mr. Desmond wants, and nothing more."

Mrs. Ryan, meantime, was occupying herself in making a cheerful fire, and gently laying cushions and coverlets over poor old Desmond's feet and ankles. "Better not to touch him yet, Miss Mononey dear," she whispered, "until the docther comes: Murtagh says that's the right thing to do." Mrs. Ryan was perfectly satisfied in her own mind that her husband always knew the right thing to do at the right time under whatever circumstances. She also conveyed to Mononia the whispered intelligence that Murtagh had just run down the road to hasten up the doctor on his way. Mr. Desmond now seemed to be quietly sleeping.

Mononia took the opportunity to seek some clear account of what had happened. She invited the young man, by a sign, to come with her into her sitting-room; and there, without indulging in any utterances or even looks of alarm, she quietly asked him to tell her all he knew of the night's events. The young man told her that Mr. Desmond and O'Rourke had come to the place of meeting, and had been drenched by rain on their way; that, when they got there, O'Rourke had suddenly disappeared, while Mr. Desmond was engaged in a short talk with the occupier of the farm-house; that Mr. Desmond became anxious and disturbed on hearing of O'Rourke's disappearance, and presently was taken with a fainting fit; and then all the rest just as she had heard it before. One inquiry, however, brought out something

which was new to her. Nobody, she heard, had ever known anything of the man O'Rourke until he was introduced by Mr. Desmond, who said that he could answer for him, and that he was a genuine patriot. Then Mononia heard footsteps approaching the roadside door; and she knew that the sound meant the coming of the doctor, and she cared for no further political revelations that night.

The doctor was a capable man, a physician of high local standing whom Mr. Desmond had known well in his brighter days. He was friendly and sympathetic, and was evidently anxious not to create any unnecessary alarm; but what he said of Mr. Desmond's condition only confirmed Mononia's worst fears. The state of the patient, he explained, showed serious symptoms of ingravescent apoplexy, and would need close and constant attention. He gave full instructions as to what was to be done, and promised to be frequent in his visits. It is hardly too much to say that Mononia saw the end already. The physician asked whether Mononia's brother was aware of his father's condition. Mononia had to answer that he was not, and, in reply to a further question, had to say that she did not know at the present moment how the news of his father's danger could be conveyed to Maurice. The doctor undertook to send a capable nurse at once, and then left, for the time, as there was no more that he could do just then. One question Mononia put to him, with white and trembling lips,—

"Is it a matter of days or only of hours?"

"We must hope for the best, my dear young lady; but, if the worst should come, it will be a question of hours rather than of days." Mononia felt as if the end had already come.

Through the whole of the next day the doctor was in close attendance. A priest from the church near at hand saw the patient during one of his intervals of

mental lucidity and comparative physical activity; and some of the Sisters of Charity from their convent on the hill, not far distant, were unceasing in their attentions to Mr. Desmond and Mononia. The girl talked and moved like one in a dream. She talked with all outward appearance of composure and self-control, she moved quietly and firmly, and was ever ready to lend a quick and serviceable hand; but it always seemed to herself as if it were some other creature, and not Mononia Desmond, who was passing from room to room of the little cottage, and giving directions to Mrs Ryan or receiving instructions or advice from the nurse or one of the Sisters of Charity. Only when she sat by her father's bedside and touched his hand, or caught his smile of recognition as he looked up and saw her in his brighter moods, did she seem to be herself; and then she had to make a real struggle against her natural self, in order that her nerves and feelings might not give way, and startle the patient by a burst of grief.

That night — the first night after poor Desmond's break-down — Mononia was sitting by her father's bedside at a late hour. Only the nurse was with her, and the two women were watching in perfect silence during one of Mr. Desmond's intervals of sleep or unconsciousness. In the next room the two Sisters of Charity were repeating the Litany for the dying, and their voices were borne into the room where Mononia sat watching. The appealing sound of the repeated words *Miserere nobis* sank into Mononia's ears and into her heart. Something like a complaining, almost like a rebellious thought arose in the mind of the troubled girl. Is this, then, all we have to ask of life? Is a prayer of mercy for mere pity to be the only outcry which human life can have to make to Heaven? Have mercy! have mercy! have mercy! — is there no other prayer which we can offer up but this one monotonous beseeching

that Divine Compassion may be prevailed upon to take pity on the creatures it has made? Mononia found herself actually covering her eyes with her hands, as if by this mere physical process she could shut out the mutinous thoughts from her heart. Then, after a moment, even while the words *Miserere nobis* still floated into the room, the rebellious mood passed wholly away from the young woman's mind; and, even while her hands still covered her eyes, light rose upon her darkness, and she bent her soul in recognition, in faith, and in reverence before the benignant, protecting Power. Never, throughout her life will Mononia forget the pain of that sudden wave of feeling which came over her on that dreary winter night, as she sat desolate beside what she already knew to be the death-bed of her father, and the sudden revulsion of her better nature and better teaching, which brought her back into the light of the better day.

Mr. Desmond's condition grew graver and graver as the hours went on. He sometimes complained of headache; and it seemed as if his arms were growing heavier and heavier, and one side sometimes appeared to be almost entirely paralyzed. His intervals of languor and of silence, whether of unconsciousness or otherwise, grew longer; but, whenever he did speak, he always spoke with coherence and lucidity, although only for a sentence or two, and he always smiled with pleasure when he saw Mononia beside him. Several times he mentioned Maurice's name, and asked when he was coming; but the glance of intelligence and inquiry had faded before Mononia could even try to explain that Maurice did not yet know of his father's illness. Thus the long, monotonous hours crept on; and the doctor and those whose advice he had called in to assist him no longer professed the slightest hope that Mr. Desmond could ever again rise from his sick-bed. Mononia's horizon grew narrower and narrower, and now she began to feel as if her utmost reach

of hope were limited to the faint expectation that Maurice might even yet come in time. Now all was done that man could do. The priest and the doctor had paid their last visits and fulfilled their latest duties for the sinking head of the house of Desmond, and Mononia and Mrs. Ryan were left alone to watch over the patient. The night was far advanced, and it was not believed by the doctor that Mr. Desmond could see the light of the sun again. Just now he was to all seeming unconscious; but he was sleeping easily, and looked as if he were enjoying the present interval of rest. Mrs. Ryan was moving noiselessly about the room, taking care that the fire was well kept up, and at the same time that the temperature should not become too high, and doing all that she could, with the instinctive skill of the old Irish nurse, to make everything as comfortable as possible for the sleeper. Mononia sat by the side of the bed, and held her hand softly on her father's hand, which lay outside the coverlet. Once or twice Mr. Desmond opened his eyes, and seemed to recognise his daughter; for he smiled on her, and his pallid face lighted with tenderness and love as she bent over him. A few moments afterwards he again opened his eyes, looked round the room, and asked in a faint voice, "Where's Maurice?" and then sank off into sleep before Mononia had time to answer his question, even if it were in her power to give it an answer.

"Where's Maurice?" That was the question which Mononia could not have answered. And, indeed, it was the one question pressing on her mind during that night of sad and lonely watching. For some days she had known nothing of Maurice's whereabouts, and she had no means of putting herself into communication with him. When she last saw him (and it was only a few days ago), he had told her that his movements would no longer depend upon himself; that he was going, in the

first instance, to an appointed place in a somewhat distant county, and that, when he arrived there, it would simply be his duty to go whithersoever he was ordered and do whatever he was commanded to do. She had understood from him that some great and combined effort was about to be made, and she had expected before this to hear the echo of its work throughout the south. Nothing, thus far, had been heard. And, even as she watched over the bed of her dying father, she felt her mind almost distracted by her anxiety for her brother's fate. When Maurice took leave of her, only those few days ago, there was nothing in Mr. Desmond's state of health to cause the slightest immediate alarm. And it was not in the least degree likely that Maurice could have received any warning of the crisis which threatened his father's life. A new pang was added to Mononia's sufferings of heart and mind by the peculiar impression which her latest talk with Maurice had left. He was going to his work, she thought, with a firm resolve, but without much hope,— as one who is determined to do his duty, come what may, rather than as one who goes forth with the glorious anticipation of some great success to be achieved. Sometimes a terrible misgiving shot through Mononia's heart as she wondered whether she ought to have encouraged him to such a risk and such a sacrifice; whether she ought not to have dissuaded him with all her might from entering on an enterprise in which he seemed to have so little hope of success,— an enterprise which therefore became a mere sacrifice, and nothing more. But her courage and her faith always came back to her before long. And she told herself that, where there was a resolute effort to be made for what she believed to be the national cause of Ireland, it would not be the part of a true sister to hold her brother back from it, and that Maurice was not the man to be kept from the place of danger by any sisterly remon-

strances or protestations. Sometimes, too, it soothed her to think that the dying father was perhaps to be saved, at least, from knowing the worst that might befall his brave and only son. If all should go well, then, indeed, it would be a cruel stroke of fate that the elder Desmond should not live to hear the great, good news. But Mononia felt a sinking of the heart which forbade her to think that all was going well or was likely to go well. And then, as she turned her eyes once more to the white, serene face on the pillow, the thought came back to her that, if a prayer could prolong her father's life, it would not be for any loving child to breathe such a prayer.

Mrs. Ryan quietly approached the bed, smoothed with gentle touch the pillow, and drew the coverlet over the patient's exposed arm and hand. Mononia observed that before doing this the kind old nursing woman had touched Mononia's hand, and, apparently finding it cold, as indeed it was, had thought it necessary to cover up Mr. Desmond's hand and arm. Mononia, therefore, withdrew her own hand gently, and wondered how she could have forgotten to notice how cold it was, and to remember that it ought not to have been laid on the patient's hand. She was touched by the thoughtfulness and the tender care of dear old Mrs. Ryan, and felt inclined to blame herself for her want of thought, for her momentary forgetfulness that the hand, even of a loving daughter, might become too cold in its touch for contact with a dying father. She rose from her seat, and walked with noiseless step to the window, and looked out upon the night.

It was a clear and not a cold winter night. The moon was shining over the river, and Mononia could distinctly hear the murmuring of the stream from where she stood. The river gave back to her the whole story of her childhood, her youth, and her life. Up and down

that river Maurice and she had rowed in their boat mornings, noons, and evenings of their childhood; in a boat on that river she had sung to Philip on many a summer evening; she had looked upon that river one moonlight night, like this, from the room in Desmond Lodge where her mother lay dying. Every joy and every sorrow of her life had its association with that river. She stole back to her seat beside her father's bed, and buried her face in her hands. Up to this moment she had, during the whole of her watching over Mr. Desmond, hardly shed any tears. Her mind, her heart, all her energy, had been kept too much on a stretch and strain by constant anxieties to allow her a moment of self-abandonment to the relief of tears. Now it would seem that there was something in the sight of the river, with all the memories it recalled, of gladness and of sadness, which relaxed the strained nerves, and allowed the frozen fountains of the heart to send forth their living stream again. She felt her tears coming, and instinctively covered her eyes with her hands.

Suddenly she started. She heard a sound which brought her back to mental activity and self-command in a moment. The sound came from somewhere on the river-side of the cottage, and it was the peculiar whistle which had been arranged as a signal for her by Maurice and Philip. There could be no possibility of her mistaking that whistle: no mere imitator could have reproduced those notes. It must be a signal from Maurice — or from Philip. Mononia looked at her father. He was still sleeping peacefully. The face had no expression of pain, neither was there any tremulous movement about the lips. Mononia made a sign of caution to Mrs. Ryan, who, she felt sure, had heard and noticed the whistle as well as she, and on whose quickness to understand a sign she could perfectly rely; and then she stole

quietly out of the room, and made her way to the door which opened on the garden. That was the side of the cottage from which the sound had come, and that was the approach which she felt sure Maurice would naturally choose if he had important tidings to bring, and did not wish to run the risk of being seen upon the open road.

Mononia opened the door of the cottage, and saw, not Maurice Desmond, but Philip Colston standing before her. He was wearing the garb of an ordinary boatman, — a rough pea-jacket, as it used to be called, and coarse blue trousers, and a cap. His tall, athletic figure looked picturesque in the moonlight. Mononia's heart seemed to stand still at the sight of him. For the moment, however, all her wild anxiety and uncertainty about the fate of his enterprise became second in her mind to one other thought.

"Hush!" she said, putting her finger to her lips, as though it were likely Phil might burst into some exclamation. "Father is very ill — I am afraid he is — oh, yes, I know he is dying!"

Phil put his arms round her, and drew her to him. Then she partly recovered her self-control and looked into his eyes.

"Tell me all," she said, "before we go into the cottage,— tell me all here."

"All is lost, for our time, at least," he answered with that composure of manner which always came to him at any hour of crisis. Mononia had often observed this peculiarity in him. His enthusiastic nature was apt to be exuberant and aflame when any enterprise had to be organised and when there was occasion to cheer others on to work; but, when the supreme moment of danger was on or when the time for hope was over, then it was always his way to be quiet and self-possessed.

"All is lost, for our time, at least," he said calmly, as

if he were telling her of some ordinary disappointment. "I will tell you all about it some other time, Mononia dearest. Now I want to hear about your father."

"He is very ill. He had a sudden attack three days ago. It seemed only a heavy cold; but he got worse and worse, and now they tell me there is no hope."

"Are you alone here?"

"Alone except for the Ryans. The doctor tells me that human help can do no more."

Philip held her in his arms; and she shed tears freely, for a moment or two, of mingled agony and relief. Then she looked up at him anxiously, and asked him in broken accents:—

"But you, Philip,—you! Are you not in danger here? How do you come to be here at such a time?"

"Dearest Mononia, I could not leave Ireland without seeing you. No danger that earth could offer could keep me from coming here to see you."

"You must leave Ireland?"

"I must leave Ireland, if I can, or be put in prison and be tried for my life. Our enterprise has failed, Mononia. There must have been spies and traitors at work. I will tell you all another time. Let me say good-bye now,—only for a time, only for a time, dearest,—you must go back to your father's side."

"And you, Philip, where are you going?"

"I shall make my way to one of the coast villages, and contrive to get to France. You shall hear from me soon."

"Philip, where is Maurice?"

"I do not know, dearest. He was sent into a different part of the country. I don't even know if anything took place there. I only hope he has made his escape."

Just then Mrs. Ryan came out to tell Mononia that Mr. Desmond was awake and had been asking for her, and that he seemed to be more comfortable and was

talking "quite raisonable," Mrs. Ryan thought. The good woman saluted Philip respectfully, but expressed in her manner no more surprise at his presence than if he had been paying an ordinary afternoon call under the most tranquil conditions.

"Let me stay for a few moments, and hear how he is?" Philip asked in suppliant tones.

"But the danger, dearest,— the danger!"

"Less danger here than anywhere else. They are not likely to come looking for me here."

Then Mononia went back into the cottage with Mrs. Ryan, and Philip was left for a few moments alone. He went quietly down to his boat, which he had fastened to the river-bank; and to all appearances, if there had been any one to see him, he was closely engaged in examining the condition of some nets which he had brought with him. He thought it as well to be prepared for all possibilities; and, if any chance observer should look out upon him from some adjacent window, he would have seemed to be but an ordinary fisherman preparing for a voyage to the harbour and the sea. Mononia soon came back to the door which opened on the garden and beckoned to him; and he went to the door, just as an ordinary fisherman might have done, if he had to make trade arrangements with some household before setting out to meet the tidal hour.

"Come and see him, Philip," she said. "I told him you were here, and he is anxious to see you. It is his wish, and we must gratify him."

Philip followed her through the silent cottage, and into Mr. Desmond's room. Mrs. Ryan left the room as Mononia and Philip came in.

"Here is Philip, dearest father."

"So kind of you to come, dear boy," Mr. Desmond murmured faintly, "I hope Maurice will come very soon."

"Dear Mr. Desmond, he may come at any moment," Philip answered; and, indeed, both Philip and Mononia were, in their secret hearts, still hoping against hope that any moment might bring Maurice to his home. Nothing could be more certain than that, if Maurice were still free, he would risk any danger to see his sister and his father before trying to make his escape from the country.

Then Mr. Desmond talked to himself incoherently for a minute or two about Maurice, and the talk faded away into silence for a while; and Mononia and Philip stood at the bedside, endeavouring not to allow too much expression of sorrow to show itself in their faces, lest it might chill the heart of the sinking man.

Mr. Desmond's speech became coherent again, and a smile stole over his white face.

"I am glad you came in time to see me, dear boy," he murmured. "It was very good of you, Phil; for I didn't always quite appreciate you."

There was another pause, and Philip was about to interpose some words of affectionate protest, when Mr. Desmond began again,—

"You will always take care of her, Phil?" His head did not move, but his eyes turned from Philip to Mononia.

"Always, while life is left to me," Philip said in a low tone of unutterable feeling.

"Thank you, dear boy. I know I can trust her to you. I feel happier. Now good-night."

Then he appeared to sink into a peaceful sleep again; and, so far as the watchers could judge, he had spoken his good-night, not as any farewell to life, but only "as one who wraps the drapery of his couch around him, and lies down to pleasant dreams." But Mononia and Philip both knew that the end was near. Philip had no thought of leaving her at such a moment, nor did Mon-

onia urge him to go and make his escape. Each thought only of the life which was fading away before their eyes.

The room was for a while in perfect stillness. Then suddenly from one of the neighbouring gardens a low, wailing sound came upon the listening ears. It was the moan of some dog, no doubt; and Philip, fearing lest it might disturb the sleeping man, touched Mononia's arm, pointed towards the window through which the sound came, and was about to leave the room and try whether something could not be done to hush the noise. But Mr. Desmond opened his eyes at that moment, and a smile of mingled sadness and sweetness came over his face.

"Do you not know that sound, Mononia?" he asked. "My child, I know it — it is the Banshee — it sings the death song for the head of the house of Desmond."

Then he lapsed into silence again. Mononia knelt by the bed, and put her arm under her father's shoulder. Philip, too, was kneeling when Mrs. Ryan gently opened the door, and brought in the priest from the neighbouring church, who had come to say another prayer for the sinking man. The priest prayed in a soft, low voice; and the other three joined in the prayer. Mr. Desmond never spoke again, but he lingered yet for some few minutes in life; and the smile still remained upon his lips, as it might have remained on the lips of some dying man on whose breast the Cross of the Legion of Honour had been pinned while the battle was still going on. It was a smile of grateful acknowledgment for the recognition given to the ancestral claims of the house of Desmond.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### PHILIP GOES INTO EXILE

PHILIP left the cottage before the first faint streak of dawn had come up in the wintry sky. He had left Mononia in charge of the good priest who had prayed by her father's death-bed and of the two Sisters of Charity who had come from the adjoining convent. Philip had spoken but a few words of farewell to Mononia,—a few words, which, indeed, were scarcely needed, telling her that the first news of his escape should come to her, and reminding her—a scarcely needed reminder—that her father's death-bed had witnessed the sealing of their engagement forever. Philip knew well that she was best left to herself, that her only relief was to be entirely given up to her sorrow, and that his presence would but add a new anxiety and a new distraction to the trials of that troubled hour. Let us do him the justice to say that he had no thought of his own danger at such a moment, except in so far as it might add a new pang to hers, and that his anxiety for his own escape from capture was only an anxiety to preserve a life which might yet bring help and happiness to her. More than ever now, he told himself, he had something to live for,—something that not even the ruin and wreck of his political cause could warrant him in exposing to needless risk. Some risk, however, he was determined to run for her sake, in order that she might as soon as possible have loving friends to look after her.

The Desmond cottage was a long way from the city, and the news of poor Mr. Desmond's death might travel but slowly; and Philip felt that Mr. Conrad and Mr. Woodward should not be long in ignorance of Mononia's lonely condition, left as she was without father or brother. There was something positively inspiring to

Philip's robust and manly nature in the thought that even now, after the downfall of his hopes and in the moment of his extreme personal danger, there was still left to him the chance of doing something to mitigate the sorrow of the woman he loved. He got into his boat, and quickly rowed down the river towards the city. His purpose was to land and moor his boat at some quiet place just before reaching the streets, and then to make his way to his recent home, Mr. Conrad's house. Mr. Conrad lived, as has been told, in a quiet, old-fashioned quarter, not too near the crowded streets; and Phil thought that there was little likelihood of his being noticed by any one as he passed, in his boatman's costume, through that part of the town. Mr. Conrad, he knew, was the earliest of early risers, and a light in the study window would tell him when the studious old man was awake and at his books.

From the few words he had exchanged with Mononia, Philip had learned enough to know that Mr. Desmond's illness had been terribly sudden in its descent to a condition of danger; and he thought it quite possible that Mr. Conrad might not yet know that any illness had befallen Mononia's father. No better adviser, no truer friend could be found than Mr. Conrad, and with him might be left the task of making the sad story known in the quickest way to Mr. Woodward, or to any others whose sympathy Mononia would care to have. There was a feeling in Philip's heart which might almost be described as selfish by some severe modern analyist of human nature,—the feeling that he should be in better courage and spirit to try for his own escape if he could think of Mononia as left under the guardianship of sympathetic and devoted friends. Of course, her loneliness would be, at the worst, only for a very short time. The priest and the Sisters of Charity would soon make her condition known to some one who cared about her; but

it was not yet dawn, and all that might be the work of hours, and Philip felt that he could not turn the helpful darkness to his own account as a fugitive until he was sure that the early morning would bring some friendly feet to the Desmond cottage. All this, and very little else, was in his mind as he made his way through the lonely and silent streets to Mr. Conrad's house,— streets which were for the most part silent except for the sound and echo of his own footsteps. Once he passed a solitary policeman on his beat; and he could not help thinking to himself, with a grim sense of satisfaction, about the stroke of good luck which that policeman was missing, when he failed to recognise Philip Colston, the political fugitive, or to see anything suspicious in the face and figure of the night wanderer in boatman's clothes. Before long he turned into the street where Mr. Conrad lived,— the street with which he had so many bright and happy associations of school-boy days and student days, so many associations more lately of political and personal troubles, of unfailing friendship and ever-genial sympathy. It flashed upon him for a moment that a visit paid by him, under such conditions, to his dear old friend, might possibly, if it came to be known, involve Mr. Conrad in some trouble with the constituted authorities. Then he put the thought contemptuously away, and asked himself what he could be thinking of if he supposed that the possibility of any danger could prevail on Mr. Conrad to forego, in one instance, his right to be among the very first, by whatever messenger the news might come, to stand at Mononia's side in the hour of her grief.

An involuntary impulse compelled Philip to come to a dead stand for a moment and look up and down the lonely street. It seemed to him, as he paused there, that he was passing in review the whole succession of events in his life up to the present hour. It seemed

fitting to him that his new departure in life should start from just that place. The imaginative sense, the poetic sense, in Phil's nature and temperament, was deep and active enough to inspire his whole being at such a time of emotional crisis with that power which makes the past as living as the present, and conjures the dreams and the memories of years gone by into the realities and the companionship of to-day. There was something akin to rapture in this momentary abandonment of himself to the associations of the place, and Philip felt himself revived and strengthened as by the tonic of some magical elixir. Then he came back to the business of his life again; and, looking up, he saw that a light was burning in Mr. Conrad's study window. He had little trouble in arousing the attention of his friend. He felt sure that Mr. Conrad must have known and would recognise the signal-whistle which Maurice and he had made it their habit to use when they wished to attract the attention of Mononia, and he whistled the tune once under the window. Once was enough: his old friend had quick ears and quick perceptions, and in a moment he had softly opened the door, and Philip was at home again.

It did not take Philip long to tell his story about Mr. Desmond and about Mononia. Mr. Conrad had not known up to that moment that Mr. Desmond was ill; but it was not so much the death of the father which concerned and grieved him as the loneliness of the daughter, with the world thus suddenly darkened before her. Of course there was nothing to be done but for Mr. Conrad to go to Desmond cottage at the earliest suitable hour of the morning, and place at Mononia's disposal whatever help and counsel it was in his power to offer, and make it clear to her that in him she had one on whom she could rely for all but fatherly care and guardianship. Mr. Conrad did not even wait for a sug-

gestion from Philip, to say that he would at once inform Mr. Woodward of what had befallen, and to add his full belief that Mr. Woodward would prove as devoted and chivalrous a friend as a girl in Mononia's position could possibly have.

"You know how he has long felt towards her, Phil," Mr. Conrad said with emotion; "but perhaps you hardly know what a generous, unselfish nature that man has, and how bravely he can put aside all purposes and wishes of his own when he sees that there are other claims still nearer and dearer than his. My dear Phil, if Mr. Woodward were a fair type of the tyrant Saxon, there would be little question of conflicting nationalities in these islands of ours."

Up to this time not one word had been spoken about the political crisis or the cause of Philip's sudden reappearance or of his boatman's costume. Mr. Conrad, of course, had not the remotest expectation, when he entered his study that morning, that Philip was about to appear on the horizon just then; and, except for the conflicting reports brought by vague and wild rumor, he knew nothing whatever about the issue thus far of the enterprise in which Philip had risked so much. But, while the story of Mr. Desmond's death and his daughter's desolate condition was on the lips and in the hearts of both men, they seemed to have no immediate attention for anything else. When, however, by the exchange of a few brief sentences the two had come to measure and to understand all that lay within their power to compass for the moment, Mr. Conrad allowed himself to indulge his natural anxiety about his friend's position and the present state of the political enterprise. If there could have been a listener in that room, he would probably have noticed that the young man and the old alike seemed firmer, braver, and more thoroughly masters of themselves when they tried to face

the terrible crisis which had come in the political life of the nation than when they were trying to arrange the best means of bringing help within the reach of a girl praying beside her father's corpse. Nor would the acute observer have held in any lesser account the sincere patriotic devotion of the old man and the young because of what he had observed.

"Now, then," Mr. Conrad said, "there is nothing to be done at Desmond cottage just for the present. I could not venture to intrude on poor Mononia's grief in what is still the dead of night. Sit down quietly, Phil, and tell me what has happened, and how you come to be here, and what you propose to do."

"I must get out of this with as little delay as possible," Phil answered quietly. "Not much choice in the matter is left to me. If I am taken by the police, I shall be brought up on a charge of high treason, I shall most certainly be convicted by a convenient jury, to whom indeed I shall make matters more convenient by declaring that I committed all the treason I possibly could, and there will soon be another trouble added to Mononia's life. My only chance is to get to some fishing village on the coast, and find some plucky and enterprising fisherman who will take me to the coast of France."

"Yes, indeed, that is the only chance I see for you; and you must get out of these streets before the dawn. But the dawn is yet a long way off, and I am sure you must be starving with hunger. I can get some hot coffee for you, and some food to eat, without leaving this room. You know I cook for myself at all manner of hours; and, in the mean time, you shall tell me as briefly as you like what has happened, and we will talk over what is best to be done to provide for your escape. Nobody will stir in this house for two hours to come; and, even if any one did stir, the movement would not be likely to put you in any danger."

Philip knew well that the only other occupants of Mr. Conrad's house were a faithful elderly man-servant and his son, a boy of sixteen, and that, even if both or either of them were to recognise him in his disguise, there would not be the slightest chance of the story being told to the police or gossiped about among the neighbours. He began to be conscious of the fact that he was well-nigh exhausted with hunger; and, as there was no greater risk in his taking his departure during one hour of darkness than another, he felt well inclined to enjoy the comfort of Mr. Conrad's early breakfast table and to have the benefit of his wise and friendly counsel. Mr. Conrad went to work meanwhile, and prepared with skilful hands a meal of hot coffee, boiled eggs, and bread and butter. Philip could not help surveying with eyes of keen interest the little breakfast table thus promptly set out by his kindly host.

"Now not a word," said Mr. Conrad, in a tone of resolute authority, "until you have eaten a reasonable share of this poor breakfast. Then we can talk."

Philip ate and drank to the satisfaction of his watchful friend. When, according to Homeric phrase, the rage of hunger and thirst was appeased, Mr. Conrad allowed him to open his mouth for conversational purposes and to tell what he knew about recent events. The story did not take long in the telling. The simultaneous rising had proved a failure. In most of the appointed districts there had been no rising whatever. The work of the spy had been clearly effective, and in some of these places the local leaders of the movement had been quietly arrested and conveyed to prison just before the time appointed for the outbreak. In other places the watchword expected from the leaders in Dublin, which was to have been the signal for action, had never arrived; and the local men, bewildered and disheartened, had no choice but to remain inactive until

movement of any kind would have been too late. Again in some few other districts an isolated rising had taken place, and had been easily surpressed, with little loss of life, by a strong military force gradually and quietly brought within reach of the spot where danger was expected. In Phil Colston's own case and under his leadership the rising had actually occurred, and had been, in the first instance, successful. Phil and his men, who were tolerably well armed, had faithfully carried out their plan of action, surrounded and attacked the neighbouring police barracks, completely surprised the police force stationed there, made prisoners of the officer and his men, and captured such weapons as the building contained. The attack was so sudden and so well managed that it amounted to a complete surprise; and the police officer, finding himself and his force hopelessly outnumbered by the Nationalists, and seeing that the building used for temporary barrack purposes was altogether unfitted for the work of standing a siege, had no choice, after a fierce interchange of shots, in which there were a few killed and wounded on either side, but to surrender to the assailants.

The police officer and his men were courteously and honourably treated by Philip and the Nationalists as prisoners of war, but their time of captivity was of short duration. Philip's next duty was to distribute the arms of the police as advantageously as he could among his followers, and then, leaving behind him a force strong enough to prevent the disarmed prisoners from escaping, to march through mountain passes towards a central point indicated in the plan of operations, where he was to be joined by two other Nationalist forces, in conjunction with whom and in command of whom he was to make his way to the capital. The general plan of the rising was that from all parts of the country the patriotic bands should thus converge upon Dublin from all parts of the

country, and that, while the military were hard at work striving to suppress the rebellion which was to have broken out in the capital itself, their efforts should be utterly paralysed by the sudden invasion of these Nationalist bands upon all quarters of the city at once. Now it is obvious that the chances of such a plan of operations depended almost entirely on their taking place simultaneously and at the right moment. If the Dublin confederates, who formed the great majority of Dublin's young men, were to rise at a given signal in armed insurrection, and if at the same moment great bodies of armed Nationalists were to stream in upon the city from various directions, it was quite impossible to say that the insurgents might not have made themselves masters of the capital, and called with thrilling effect upon the Nationalists of the whole island to rise all over the country in support of the movement.

The readers of this story will remember that Philip Colston would have been well contented for himself if the movement had realised nothing more than a splendid demonstration of the resolve of Irishmen to risk their lives in proclamation of what they believed to be their country's national rights. Philip and his followers never reached the capital. As they approached the first point of junction marked out for them, they were met by the disheartening news that the place had already been occupied by a strong force of cavalry, infantry, and artillery; that, of the Nationalist bands who were to meet Philip there, one had been encountered and driven back, scattered and pursued in all directions by military detachments; and that the leaders of the other bodies had been arrested and put into prison before the hour appointed for the march. So far as Philip could ascertain, no rising whatever had taken place in Dublin; and, indeed, the principal leaders of the movement there had been quietly made prisoners shortly before the time

for the rising. It was quite plain, in fact, that the whole plans of the Nationalists had been fully in the possession of the authorities in Dublin Castle, who had watched, and allowed all preparations to be made until the time arrived for thwarting the enterprise and crushing the rebellion with as little bloodshed as possible.

Philip found no trouble in getting from the peasantry of the country through which he passed all the information they could give him as to the state of affairs. The feeling of the population in the small towns and villages was everywhere in his favour; and he felt sure that he could rely on the information they gave him, so far as their means of knowledge went. He could not doubt that the point of junction indicated for him was already held by a military force of overwhelming strength. He knew there was no hope whatever of his being joined on the way by any band of Nationalists in arms. His own brave little band had been strong enough in numbers to capture a police barrack, but would hardly count for much when opposed to an intrenched military encampment. On the other hand, he could not but know that the intrenched military encampment would take the trouble to find out what was going on in the neighbouring country, and that he and his little band could not long keep moving about among these hills and valleys without finding themselves put to the choice between capture and death. The chivalrous, passionate, romantic heart of the young man was chilled and sickened at the thought of having to creep back ignominiously into the commonplace ways of life, after all his hopes and his dreams that he might do something worthy the cause of his country. Philip would have thought little, at that moment, of sacrificing his life. The mere romantic vanity, which so often belongs to the nature of even the bravest and manliest young fellow, would of itself alone have been strong enough, were there no higher inspiring

purpose, to make him think little of such a sacrifice. But that peculiarity of his temperament which has already been described, that quality which gave him increasing composure and self-control as difficulty and danger increased around him, stood him in good stead just now. He took a steady survey of the conditions which surrounded him, and his mind was soon made up. There would be nothing heroic in the act if he were to expose his little band of followers to the fire of the military encampment. That would be but poor and pitiful evidence of the patriotic spirit possessing the breasts of young Irishmen. That was not the idea which Phil Colston always had in his mind when he thought of the good that might be done for the national cause by some organised and general demonstration of Ireland's willingness to make sacrifice for her cause. He might just as well invite his men to commit suicide, to imitate the "happy despatch" of the Japanese, in order to show that there were men in Ireland who were willing to die for their country.

It was clear that through whatever mishaps, by the evil influence of whatever treachery, the plan for a simultaneous rising all over the country had proved an utter failure. And it could do no honor to the cause that, if a few brave fellows were, out of sheer despair, to get themselves shot down for nothing, it was impossible that even a small band of armed men could hold together for many hours without attracting the attention of the military force. And, after taking counsel with the men he knew best among his followers, Phil came to the grim conclusion that there was nothing for it but to give an order for the dispersing of his little band, each man to provide for his own safety in the best way he could. So the little band dispersed; and Philip became a wanderer through the villages and across the mountains, making his way as quickly as he could towards the south. In

every village he passed through he received more and more news which told him that the projected rising had been an absolute failure. His only hope of securing his own safety now was to make for the seacoast, and to lie concealed until he could find some vessel to convey him to France. And from France he proposed to go to the United States, where he could be sure of finding sympathetic fellow-countrymen and friends. On one object, meanwhile, his mind was absolutely set: he would see Mononia, tell her of what had passed, tell her of his purposes for the future, obtain her sanction for them, say good-bye to her, and then go on his way. Thus it was that he found himself on the river outside Mononia's garden, little dreaming of the sad conditions under which Mononia was to receive him. And thus it was that he now came to be telling his story and rapidly expounding his plans to his old friend and guide, Mr. Conrad.

Not much time was lost in telling the story or in arranging the plans. The details of the escape had, indeed, to be left very much to the chances of the next few days, the only definite understanding to which the two friends could come being that Phil should make his way to some small, obscure seacoast town where he had friends, and where he could arrange for some means of getting to France. Once safe in France, Philip could take quiet counsel with his friends at home as to his future movements. And Mr. Conrad was quite in accordance with Philip as to his idea of settling himself for good in the American States. The future, of course, looked dark and dismal to both on that dreary winter morning. But, so far as their eyes could pierce the gloom, this seemed the best available project. Some arrangement would have to be made, that Philip's small personal means should be transferred to safe keeping outside the confiscating powers of British law. And

Mr. Conrad undertook to consult with Mr. Woodward about carrying out this purpose. Philip and he both felt alike,—that there could be no wiser counsellor and no trustier friend than he to help them in this project.

Mr. Conrad was able to supply Philip for the present with money enough to give him the means of escape, and Philip had no hesitation in accepting the loan which his old friend offered as a matter of course. Mr. Conrad was as anxious as Philip himself could be that the young man should leave the city at the earliest possible moment, and get into the lonely roads and fields again before the dawn of day. It was settled in a moment between them that Philip had better go alone, for the good reason that one wayfarer would be less likely to attract attention than two. There was but little of the effusive, and there was nothing of the sentimental in this parting talk between the two friends. A great crisis had come in the lives of both of them,—a crisis which was a question of life or death to one. They both understood this, and each assumed that the other thoroughly understood this; and no words were wasted in the mere expression of feeling, the talk was altogether of immediate arrangements and practical details. Almost the last words spoken by Mr. Conrad to Philip gave his renewed assurance that he would look after Mononia, would see that she was not left in solitude, and would take care that she should have the first news he could get concerning the whereabouts of Maurice. Almost the last words spoken by Philip to Mr. Conrad were likewise of Mononia and Maurice. Then there was a last grasp of the hands, and Philip set out on his way to exile.

## CHAPTER XXX

### HOW MAURICE CAME HOME IN TIME

EVERY day now brought fresh news of the collapse which had come on the secret organisation. It can never be known, with any certainty, how far and how deeply the secret organisation had gone throughout the country. The young men who were mainly concerned in it were naturally inclined to overestimate its strength and its extent; and it may be that some of those who were concerned in it, and who are very elderly personages now, are still inclined to believe that, with more skilful and cautious arrangements in advance, the movement might have led to a formidable struggle, and might, at least, have made in the eyes of the whole world a memorable and powerful demonstration of Ireland's cause. On the other hand, it is needless to say that cool, calculating, and observant men of the world made up their minds that there was nothing really serious in the whole affair, and insisted that the constituted authorities had been thrown into a complete scare by the crazy project of a few overgrown schoolboys, here and there. One fact which was admitted on both sides — on all sides — was that the government had obtained, from some source, remarkable accurate information as to the general plan of the movement and the time when the simultaneous rising was to take place.

The policy of the government now was apparently to avoid making too much of the whole business. There were to be State prosecutions, of course. The leaders who had been arrested in Dublin and in various parts of the country were to be put upon their trial; and these, and especially those who among them had been taken in any overt act of treason against the crown, were likely, if

convicted,— so people thought,— to be punished with exemplary severity. But the general belief among that large class of persons who always profess to know the inner purpose of governments was that the constituted authorities were anxious this time, as far as possible, to avoid giving any sanction to the belief prevailing among foreign states, that Ireland was in a condition of chronic rebellion, and that the rising in the summer of 1848 had been put down with no other effect than to make room for another rising in the winter of the same year.

Our narrative must leave political events and the opinions which men were beginning to form concerning them, and go back to what was passing in the obscure little cottage where all that remained of the Desmond family was represented by an old man dead and a living young woman, much distracted by grief and many anxieties. Mononia bore up bravely, so far at least as outer appearances were concerned, against her grief and her fears; and she felt a melancholy satisfaction in fulfilling what she knew would have been her father's heartfelt wish, and going through the ceremonial honours of her position with becoming self-control and dignity. According to the fashion prevailing up to that time in Ireland, she received visits of condolence from friends and acquaintances all day long; and the head of the house of Desmond was receiving, after his death, a great many more visitors than he had been accustomed to receive during the later months of his life. The priests from the neighbouring church, and the Sisters of Charity from the convent, showed her attentions more sympathetic and more helpful than those which were given by the ceremonial visitors, and did all that could be done to comfort and strengthen her. Mr. Conrad was with her often, and brought her any scraps of news which he could rely on concerning the fate of the political movement and the escape — or possible escape — of

her brother and her lover. Perhaps, too, in one sense it was well for Mononia that her anxiety about Maurice and about Philip prevented her from giving herself wholly up to grief for her father's death, and on the other hand that very grief prevented her from abandoning herself to mere anxiety for her brother and her lover. Nothing had as yet been heard of Maurice; and, as no one could conjecture by what devious and obscure ways he might have to attempt his escape,— supposing him still free to make any such attempt,— it was impossible to form any calculation as to the time when certain tidings, some way or the other, could be received. Mononia sometimes said to herself that, if the whole real situation could have been described to her by prophetic inspiration six months before, she could never have believed herself capable of getting through it with so much outward appearance of composure. Never could she have believed — so she told herself — that she or any other woman could, under such conditions of conflicting grief and anxiety, have gone so quietly through all the weary formalities then belonging to the dreary days between a death and a funeral.

Mr. Woodward called at the cottage more than once, but only spoke with Mr. Conrad or one of the priests, and firmly declined to disturb Mononia by asking for a personal interview. He explained that he only came to the cottage for the purpose of testifying to his sympathy and placing his services at the absolute disposal of those who might be supposed to represent the wishes of Mononia. Mr. Conrad took upon himself the whole arrangements for the funeral, and endeavoured, as far as possible, to keep Mononia perfectly sheltered from intrusive questions or suggestions on the drearily prosaic details of that most melancholy business. Kathleen Fitzwilliam was one of the earliest among the visitors who came to see Mononia, and Mononia was really

touched by the sisterly sympathy and affection which the girl seemed to show. In truth, the pretty Kathleen, for all her sentimentality, had a heart of genuine feeling where love-making was not concerned; and she felt sincerely moved by Mononia's grief and by her desolate condition. Perhaps, too, as our noblest natural emotions are usually of a somewhat complex nature, Kathleen's sympathy with her friend's anxieties may have been quickened by the thought that, if she had not broken off so suddenly with Mononia's brother, that brother might not have flung himself thus recklessly into a desperate enterprise. However that may be, it is certain that Kathleen did feel a sincere concern for Mononia's troubles, and that she threw her arms round her neck and clasped her closely, and thus tempted Mononia for the first time since her father's death to indulge in the luxury of a burst of tears.

One anxiety was forever on Mononia's mind,—she expected every moment to hear some news of Maurice; and she did not know which she dreaded the more, the actual hearing of the news or the absence of any tidings whatever. So far as she could learn from Mr. Conrad, the rising had collapsed without any serious loss of life; but, then, it seemed to be generally understood that there had been some loss of life. And who was to assure her that the life of her brother had not been one of the forfeits paid? Even suppose the worst had not come, was it not more than likely that Maurice must be a prisoner? If he were still at large, did it not seem reasonable to believe that he would have found some means of sending her assurance of his safety so far? Was it not only too probable that he would have run any risk, as Philip had done, for the sake of seeing her? Was it not likely that he would run such risks even yet? Here was a new terror added to the other terrors of the crisis. Suppose she were thus to be the inno-

cent, unconscious cause of Maurice's capture? Suppose he might have got safely out of the country if he had resolved to think of nothing but the means of escape, and had lost his chance because of his fond wish to see his sister once again?

While her thoughts were distracted by these anxieties and fears, Mononia had not the luxury of being left to herself and to the indulgence of her emotions. It was not in accordance with the usages of the time and the country that the daughter of a father just dead should be left to the solitude of her own room. The friends and neighbours would have thought it strange if they were not allowed, at such a time, to pay their visits of condolence, and express their sympathy with the bereaved daughter. Mononia had made up her mind that she would not abandon herself to the mere indulgence of her own grief, and that she would accept with kindness the visits which were paid to her out of kindness. She began vaguely to realise within her own mind the narrowness of the limitations which bound the human horizon. She found that it was not in her power to look forward to any condition of life which could be different for her from that in which she had been living during the last few days. She could not pierce through the atmosphere of the present. She could no more see into a life once again free from immediate sorrow and from torturing anxiety than she could see with her physical eyes through a solid wall. She went through the routine duties of those darkened days with a mechanical regularity and with a dull, resigned feeling that she might as well be attending to those duties as doing anything else or doing nothing. She sometimes slept for a while out of pure physical exhaustion,— slept because it was no longer possible for her to keep awake just then; but she had no dreams, and her sleep seemed to her only a mere lethargic form of her waking

condition. It would have been a relief to find herself, for no matter how short a time, in the unreal, fanciful Arabian Night of dreamland; but, even while she slept, she was still the same Mononia Desmond whose dead father lay as yet uncoffined near her, the same Mononia Desmond who had just parted from her lover under conditions which made it all too uncertain whether she should ever see him again in life, the same Mononia Desmond who had as yet no means of knowing whether her only brother was living or dead.

This last uncertainty was suddenly removed. On the evening of the day but one preceding that appointed for her father's funeral, Mononia was sitting with two or three condoling women visitors when Murtagh Ryan opened the door, looked into the room, and then with an air of ineffable mystery made a signal to Mononia that he had something to say to her. Mononia assumed that he wished to consult her about some of the arrangements for the funeral; and, hastily excusing herself, she went out into the hall, and closed the door behind her. Murtagh did not wait for her to ask him any question.

"Please, Miss Mononia," he whispered, "it's the young Masther."

"My brother?"

"Yes, Miss, Masther Maurice himself."

Any intelligent observer, who could have seen Murtagh's face at that moment, would have known that he understood very well the peculiarities of the situation. Under ordinary circumstances, Murtagh could have felt nothing but gratification, however melancholy in its nature, at the return of the young master to his home in time to attend the funeral of his father. But Murtagh's face expressed just that mingling of dread which was in Mononia's heart at the moment,— dread as to the danger which Maurice might have brought upon himself by making his appearance at such a time, even in the house of his dead father.

"Where is my brother?" Mononia asked in tremulous accents.

"He is in the room with the Masther himself, God rest his soul. He told me I was not to say a word to anyone but you, Miss Mononia dear."

Mononia forgot all about her visitors, and hastened to her father's room, where she found Maurice kneeling beside the bed of their dead father. In a moment the brother and sister were clasped in each other's arms.

"O Maurice, Maurice, I am so glad you have come," Mononia sobbed. "I can't help it,— it is like a new life to me to see you again." Then she fell upon his neck once more, and shed new tears. "But you are in danger, Maurice, are you not. How did you come here, and why have you run such a risk?" Again she broke down into sobs.

"The moment I heard that father was dead," Maurice said, supporting his sister in his arms, "I made up my mind that I would come to this house at once if I could only succeed in getting here, no matter what the danger might be. I have done all I wanted to do since I heard that he was dead. I am here to take a last look at him before he is laid in earth, and to clasp you to my heart, Mononia, before I am discovered and made a prisoner. I could not leave you alone, dearest sister, at such a time,— no, not even if you yourself had known of my coming, and could have urged me not to come. Now tell me, can we have an hour alone together? We have so much to tell each other, and I don't want my coming to be known."

"You will try to get away safely?" Mononia asked with a faint gleam of hope lighting her eyes.

"Yes, yes, I will try, dear girl, for your sake much more than for my own. But I could not go on my way and try for my own safety without seeing you and seeing him, no matter what the consequences might be.

So far I have accomplished my purpose, and I am ready to meet the worst."

"Stay here," Mononia said hurriedly. "I shall return in a moment or two, and then you can tell me all."

She met Murtagh Ryan in the hall, and told him that on no account was any one to be admitted, for the present, to the room in which her father lay. Then she went back to her visitors, and felt a sensation of profound relief when she saw that Mr. Conrad had come and was conversing with them. She told her visitors frankly that she could not give them more of her time just then, and she sent a glance at Mr. Conrad which expressed her wish that he should remain and do the melancholy honours in her absence. At that time it was not supposed that people who came to pay visits of condolence must necessarily bring their visits to a close because the mistress of the house had other duties which commanded her attention. Condoling visitors were coming and going all day, and coming and going until far into the night; and the ordinary rules of visit-paying did not govern these funeral ceremonials.

Then Maurice and Mononia had their long talk together. Maurice had, first of all, to hear the story of his father's sudden illness and of his closing days. Then came his turn; and he told his story, the substance of which we know already. Maurice's part of the rising had proved an utter failure. The local leaders of that part of the country where his services were to have been employed had been arrested before the time appointed for the movement, and Maurice had received warning from friends of the cause just early enough to save him from being included in that group of prisoners. As he was trying to make his escape into a different part of the country, he was arrested on suspicion by an officer of police with a small force under his command; and he was about to be brought before the magistrates

in the nearest town, when the news of his arrest spread among the villages and roads and fields, and a large body of peasantry gathered together, armed with pitchforks and scythes and a few old muskets. A sudden attack was made upon the police, against which they were unable to offer any effectual resistance, being unprepared for so vigorous an attempt. They were scattered in all directions, many of them receiving severe wounds; and Maurice was set at liberty by his unlooked-for friends. Then the rescuing party dispersed as suddenly as it had gathered together,—sank into the earth, one might say,—and by the time a strong military force had come on the scene there was no one to shoot down and no one to arrest.

Maurice found shelter in the houses of the farmers and peasantry for miles and miles across the country. His first idea was, as Philip's had been, to make his way to some small, obscure seaport town, and endeavour to find there some means of getting to France. In one of the villages, however, he met with a kindly priest, who knew him and who told him of his father's dangerous illness; and then Maurice made up his mind that, happen what might, he would direct his course towards the Desmond cottage in the faint hope of seeing his father yet still alive or, at all events, of kneeling beside him in death and doing something to console his sister. He went almost recklessly on his way, but he could not avail himself of the ordinary modes of travel, for an attempt to enter a mail-coach yard could hardly be anything other than delivering himself to the police; and so, except for an occasional lift on a farmer's cart, he had to make the journey on foot. His journey would have been accounted but short for a traveller under ordinary conditions; but to Maurice it seemed long and weary, and only his resolve sustained him. At last he arrived, unnoticed, as he supposed, by any unfriendly eyes, at the door of the Desmond cottage.

Unnoticed as he supposed, but Maurice had not made proper estimate as to the numbers and the watchfulness of unfriendly eyes at such a time and under such conditions. A great poet has spoken of darkness with her myriad eyes. During times of political stress and storm, darkness itself seems sometimes to have myriad eyes to watch in the interests of the constituted authorities. About ten o'clock that night Murtagh Ryan came once again, with a face of mysterious meaning, into the room, and told Mononia and Maurice that Captain Jerningham and Mr. Woodward had called, and that they particularly wished to see Miss Desmond. Mononia told Murtagh that he had better ask Mr. Conrad to be kind enough to receive the visitors on her behalf, but Murtagh presently came back with the announcement that the gentlemen could see no one but Miss Desmond herself.

"This must be something serious," Mononia said with a glance of dismay at her brother. "I must go and see them, Maurice."

"I suppose it's all up with me," Maurice replied composedly. "I don't so much care now. I have seen you — and him."

"Mr. Woodward would never come with any evil purpose," Mononia said earnestly.

"A friend may have to break bad news to his friend; and I don't see, dear Mononia, what good news any friend could have to bring to you and me just now."

All this was spoken in hushed words, and with a kind of feeling in the hearts of the brother and sister that any words on a subject of ordinary human interest were a profanation of the death-chamber. Then Mononia knelt for a moment by the bed on which her father lay. Outside the door she paused, thinking where she could find a place in which to receive the visitors in confidential seclusion. Murtagh Ryan seemed to divine her

thoughts; for he suggested that Mr. Woodward and the captain might be brought into the kitchen, and that he and his wife would clear out, and take care that nobody else came in. Mononia gratefully accepted the good old man's suggestion, and she went into the kitchen where a cheery fire of turf was burning. In a moment Murtagh introduced the two visitors, and left the kitchen, closing the door behind him. Mononia gave her hand to Mr. Woodward, and waited for him to speak.

"We have come on a painful business," Mr. Woodward began, with his usual formality of manner, "especially painful at a moment like the present. Nothing but a wish to save you still more pain, at such a time, could have induced Captain Jerningham and me to intrude upon you."

"Nothing,— nothing," murmured Captain Jerningham.

"I know well that no visit of yours could be an intrusion," Mononia said. "I know your visit must be friendly. You have something to tell me? Please tell me at once."

Woodward turned to Captain Jerningham, as if leaving the business in his hands.

"Well, you see, it's this, Miss Desmond," the gallant captain began very awkwardly. "We have come to know — that is, I have come to know — that your brother is in this house. No fault of yours, Miss Desmond. Of course, nobody can blame you; but, you see, I have a duty to perform. The chief of the police here holds a warrant for your brother's arrest, and he has certain information that your brother is in this house; and, of course, it is his duty to make the arrest. Now he's not half a bad fellow, this chief of police; and when he came and told me about it, thinking that perhaps he might need my help to see that no breach of the peace could be possible, he said he was very sorry to have to make

the arrest at such a time. I told him I had a kind of idea, and that I'd like to get our friend Woodward here, who is a magistrate, to talk it over, and see what could be done." Here Captain Jerningham's eloquence failed him for the moment, and his explanation came to an end.

"The idea was this," said Woodward, taking up the tale, "it was Captain Jerningham's idea altogether; and it seemed to me to do credit to his good feeling and his sympathy. Captain Jerningham suggested that he should come quietly here and see you or your brother, and say that, if your brother would promise to surrender after your dear father's funeral, no attempt would be made to arrest him before that time. You see, Miss Desmond, there are no possible means of escape. Your brother's return here was fully expected by the police since noon to-day, and every way of access or departure is closely watched. These police officers have their duty to discharge, as you will quite understand; but Captain Jerningham thought it would, in some degree at all events, spare the feelings of you and your brother and your friends if your brother were left free to accompany his father's remains to the burial-ground."

"Yes, I thought it might be something of a relief to your mind and to his," Captain Jerningham said. "I know that, if I were in such a fix, and were going to be arrested by the police, I should like to be allowed to attend my dead father's funeral anyhow, before they ran me in. That's all I want to say, Miss Desmond; and I only hope you won't blame me or misunderstand me. It's a bad business altogether, and there is not much I can do, or any one can do, to serve you at such a time, but still I thought this might be something; and you know how devoted Kathleen Fitzwilliam is to you — and I, too, Miss Desmond." The gallant captain again broke down.

By this time Mononia had quite recovered her self-control and composure.

"Captain Jerningham," she said, "you have acted like a friend and like a true gentleman. I am deeply grateful to you, and I know that my brother will be equally grateful when he hears of your chivalrous action. But, tell me, will not this get you into some trouble or blame of some kind,—with those who are in power, I mean?"

"Well, you see, Miss Desmond, I have talked all that over with my colleague in this business, the police officer, who, as I told you, isn't half a bad sort of fellow, and we've had Woodward's advice; and we don't see that anything can be known about it if your brother will agree to our terms."

"There would be nothing gained for any one," Mr. Woodward interposed, "by his not agreeing to them. The arrest must take place in any case; but Captain Jerningham thought, and we agreed with him, that your brother might be spared until he had performed a son's last duty at his father's funeral."

"I think I may venture to speak for my brother," Mononia said quietly. "He will thoroughly understand and appreciate the generous spirit, the chivalrous spirit, in which you are acting, Captain Jerningham; and you, too, Mr. Woodward."

"The credit is all Captain Jerningham's," Woodward said. "It involves me in no risk and no trouble; and I may frankly own, even in the presence of a military officer, that, if I could have helped your brother to escape, I would have done so, although I am a justice of the peace. I hope, however, that the government will be sensible enough not to make too much of all this recent affair, and that your brother will soon be a free man once again."

"I am sure I hope so, too," added Captain Jerningham, "and I don't care who knows it. Miss Desmond,

we are very thankful to you for receiving us so kindly at such a time, and I am sure you will understand us; for, indeed, you have our heartfelt sympathy — and Kathleen knows how I feel about it."

"I shall never forget your kindness, and I am sure I can say the same for my brother." Mononia was about to take leave of her friends, but she saw that they both seemed to hesitate about bringing the visit to a close. In a moment she understood the reason.

"Do you wish me to see my brother," she asked, "and to bring you his distinct promise?"

"Well, perhaps it would be better that you should do so," Jerningham replied rather awkwardly. "Of course, if you can answer for him" —

"I am sure I can answer for him," Mononia declared firmly. "I know that he will quite understand how generously you have acted towards him, and I am sure that he will carry out to the letter any promise I make on his behalf. But, if you think it better to have the promise from him himself, I can bring him to you at once."

"Not necessary in the least," Captain Jerningham assured her fervently. "Your word, Miss Desmond, is quite enough for me. I'd take all the risk if there were any risk, only I know that there is none; but I assure you that I would take the risk if there were any." He had not managed his sentence very well, but his meaning was quite clear.

"And now, Miss Desmond, we will take our leave," said Woodward; "and we can only once again offer our apologies for having broken in upon your hour of sorrow."

No other word was spoken. Mononia's heart was too full for words. Captain Jerningham did not see his way to make any other observation, and Mr. Woodward saw by Mononia's face that she was near breaking down and

ought to be spared further trial. Mononia held out her hand in farewell, first to Mr. Woodward, as the elder man and the older friend, and then to Captain Jerningham. The gallant captain bent reverently over the hand, then raised it to his lips, and so took his leave.

Thus it came about that Maurice Desmond was able to take part in his father's funeral and to join in the prayers over his yet open grave.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### "THERE LIES YOUR WAY, DUE WEST"

MONONIA'S life during the few months which succeeded the death of her father was a time such as she had never experienced before. Day followed day without seeming to make the slightest difference in the regular routine of her monotonous existence. Except for the kindly attentions of the Sisters of Charity, the frequent visits of Mr. Conrad, and an occasional call from Mr. Woodward, she had no intercourse with the outer world. She had received a kind invitation from Kathleen Fitzwilliam to spend a month of perfect quietude with her at the seaside home of the Fitzwilliams; but she had firmly, although very gratefully, refused to avail herself of the sympathetic offer. She reasoned out the case with a thorough appreciation of Kathleen's good-natured intentions. She felt sure that Kathleen would be quite ready, in a mood of generous self-sacrifice, to devote herself to a month of absolute sequestration from the society of her little world, in order that her friend might have a time of rest and comfort and be well cared for at the seaside. But she did not feel that she had any right to put Kathleen's friendship to so severe a test, and she frankly admitted to herself that in rescuing Kathleen from the consequences of her offer she was not resisting any strong temptation on her own part.

Mononia felt quite sure that nothing could enable her to bear up against the gloom of her present life so well as steady devotion to regular work of some kind. She did not leave the cottage on the riverside even for a single day. As soon as the period of quiet reverence due to the funeral ceremonies had passed over, she settled herself down once again to the regular business of teach-

ing her girl pupils; and, by the good offices of the Sisters of Charity, Mr. Woodward, and Mr. Conrad, she soon had as many pupils round her as she could find time to teach. She told herself again and again how grateful she ought to be to Providence for the kind friends it had brought round her at her time of trial and loneliness, and for the manner in which by their help she had been enabled to make a living for herself, and to keep above the position of mere dependency, and free from the ignoble troubles and miseries of absolute poverty. She put her whole mind and energy into the work of instruction, and into the occasional literary occupations with which she varied her daily business and helped to increase her little earnings. Her two faithful retainers, Murtagh Ryan and his wife, were with her still; and she felt a positive glow of delight when she found week after week that she was able to pay them their wages and to insist on their taking the money. Mononia knew very well that Murtagh and his wife would have remained with her to the end of their lives if she had never been able to pay them any wages whatever, so long as she gave them a room to sleep in and any sort of food to keep them alive. It was, therefore, a source of unmingled gratification to her that she could still not only give a home to these dear old friends, but could actually pay them, from week to week, their wages on the old scale.

The winter had passed away, the fields and the river were beginning to gladden once more with the coming of spring, and the hills on the far horizon were showing their outlines again. Mononia's heart began to quicken, too, under all these inspiring conditions, and she felt within herself a vague sense of rekindling life, telling her and assuring her that she had something yet in life to live for, something to hope for, something to strive for, something to accomplish, some good to be done,

some service to be rendered, and even some happiness to be enjoyed; and she felt grateful to Heaven for such grace and such gifts. One cheering, sweetening, strengthening influence was always with her,—the influence of her love for Philip Colston and of his love for her. So far as that supreme influence on her life was concerned, all was going well. Philip had made his escape safely to France, and from France he had crossed the Atlantic. He had met with an enthusiastic reception from Irish men and women settled in New York and other great American cities, where even then Philip Colston's countrymen were coming to be an element of no slight importance in political and industrial affairs. The story of his efforts for the national cause in Ireland had gone out before him to the United States, and his exclusion from the bar in Ireland because of his political opinions had been well recompensed by his instant admission to the bar of New York State. Philip, therefore, had made up his mind to settle down to the career of an advocate in the Empire City, as New York is proud to call itself; and he was also beginning to write for newspapers and magazines there. Everything looked promising with him; and he told Mononia, more than once in his letters, that it was quite a new sensation for him to find himself able to express his opinions on political questions freely, without any fear that he might thereby be damaging his uncle's chances of promotion to the bench of justice. Mononia read this particular passage in his letter with a feeling of peculiar gratification; for she saw that he must be recovering his boyish good spirits again when he could think of indulging in a sentence or two of chaff at the expense of his uncle, who had by this time, it should be said, found the ambition of his life crowned by the judicial wig and throned on the judicial bench.

Philip wrote to Mononia incessantly. In those days

the mails from America were slower and less frequent than in our own more active days; but every mail from New York brought a long letter for Mononia, telling her all about Philip's doings and his thoughts, his hopes and plans for the future. With Philip and Mononia, it was now merely a question of arrangement and of suitable time when the step was to be taken by which their lives were to be joined forever. It was clear to them both that Philip could not come back to Ireland for the purpose of marrying Mononia, because, although the British government was not supposed to be thirsting for political prosecutions, yet the part which he had played in the late rising had been too conspicuous to allow of any hope that his temporary return to his native land might be allowed to pass unnoticed. Philip knew perfectly well that Mononia would be quite ready when the suitable time came to join her life with his, and share its upward struggles, and that she was not the girl who could bid him wait until he had first made sure of a steady income, and could invite his bride to a handsomely furnished home. The letters which passed between them did not go much into details of this kind, and were, indeed, genuine love-letters, each lover writing with an absolute faith in the love and devotion of the other. Philip assumed all through, as a matter of course, that Mononia would come out to New York to be married as soon as Maurice could accompany her, and take charge of her on the voyage to that new country which was henceforward to be the home of all three.

Thus is our closing narrative brought back to the fortunes of Maurice Desmond. This part of the story may be very briefly told. The honourable agreement between Maurice and Captain Jerningham was, of course, faithfully carried out; and immediately after his father's funeral Maurice surrendered himself as a prisoner to the authorities of the southern city. Mr.

Woodward accompanied him on this business, and offered to find any amount of bail for Maurice's appearance, whenever called upon to stand his trial. The authorities at Dublin Castle were anxious to get rid of the whole affair without making too much of it; and it was arranged that Maurice should not be brought to trial on the more serious charge of treason-felony, but merely accused of taking part in an unlawful assembly and a disorderly attack on the police. Maurice was kept about a month in prison, waiting for his arraignment, and then, when he had been duly tried and found guilty, was let off with two months' imprisonment on one charge and six months on the other, so that his whole term of durance, in consequence of the secret movement, only kept him in prison for nine months. Maurice declared to his friends that he saw the hand of Mr. Justice Colston, the new judge, in the arrangements which cut him off from any serious claim to martyrdom. "The old boy never liked me," Maurice used to say, when he began to recover something of his familiar and good boyish spirits. "He never liked me, because he knew that I was always backing up Philip; and I feel sure that he thought he could best punish me by taking the conceit out of me, and not allowing me to fancy myself worthy of a charge of high treason."

The months went their due course, and Maurice was free again. Then there was nothing to be done but to make the earliest possible preparations for Mononia and Maurice to leave the home of their childhood and their youth, and seek their new home across the Atlantic. Mononia and Maurice left some dear friends as well as some dear memories behind,—no other friend, not even Mr. Woodward himself, so dear to Mononia as Mr. Conrad, whom she might never hope to see again. Only when Mr. Conrad was paying his farewell visit to her, the last farewell at which no other friends were

to be present, did she learn from his lips the truth which she had long guessed at, and knew that he had loved her mother.

Mononia and Maurice never heard anything about the career of Mr. O'Rourke after the death of their father. O'Rourke was not made a witness on the part of the government at any of the trials which followed the failure of the secret movement. The common belief was that O'Rourke's services had been confined to some parts of the south of Ireland during that crisis, and that it was not from him the really serviceable information came which enabled the government to anticipate and make preparations against the outbreak of the secretly organised rebellion. O'Rourke was, however, undoubtedly one of the hirelings made use of by the police authorities at the time to pass themselves off as promoters of rebellion, and thus get hold of information about conspiracies, when conspiracies were going on, or get up conspiracies when there were none such ready to hand. Years after, at the time of the Fenian movement, O'Rourke became known again; and his services during this later crisis were so important as to secure him a place in the witness-box, and the satisfaction of giving testimony which sent some sincere and devoted enthusiasts to the convict settlements. So we may dismiss this ignoble figure, which, indeed, has a place in this story only because of the indirect influence its presence had on the life of poor Mr. Desmond. The political informer is a much less familiar figure in the domestic history of these countries than he used to be in the days of the Georges and William IV., and perhaps we may venture to indulge a hope that the civilisation of these countries will soon regard his very memory with wonder and disgust. He has his place in history, like the rack and the thumb-screw; and it will be well for the world when his place knows him no more.

Meanwhile Mononia and her brother have taken the last leave of their friends, and their vessel is at sea; and they are looking back upon the disappearing hills which partly surround the harbour endeared and made sacred to them by so many happy recollections. Yet a little, and the land of their birth and of their love will have passed wholly out of sight. But, when the sensation of that parting has spent the keenest of its force, there will arise in the hearts of both new longings and new hopes,—longings for the first sight of the American shore and hopes for the years to be passed there. In Mononia's mind is ever present the thought that, when she reaches that shore, her lover will be waiting there to meet her.

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